

Nicaragua's
election
showdown

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then and

**Nixon
Now**

An essay by John B. Judis
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Chicago community organizer Oscar Worrill: testifying, not signifying.

Brutality against blacks: cops and copouts

By Salim Muwakkil

CHICAGO

Prodded by a chorus of complaints from black leaders about alleged incidents of police misconduct, Chicago's city council last week began conducting public hearings on the issue of police brutality in the black community. In Vineland, N.J., hundreds of black youths voiced similar complaints in a two-day street rampage after officials exonerated a white police officer who shot an unarmed black suspect.

In Prince George's County, Md., an African-American state's attorney known for his cross-racial appeal has become embroiled in a racial controversy surrounding a police killing. In New York City, the list of people who have died while in police custody has grown so long, black leaders are demanding a special prosecutor be appointed to investigate.

Similar situations apply in cities across the country, as tensions continue to heighten between law enforcement officials and the black youths who are their primary targets. Occasionally, the confrontations assume bizarre proportions, as in the Labor Day disturbances in Virginia Beach, Va., where an annual gathering of more than 50,000 mostly black college students erupted into a two-day melee amid complaints of flagrant harassment by local police.

Although the common denominator of these incidents is the conflict between the police and black youth, other conflicts generally emerge in their aftermath. Usually there are conflicting opinions on the causes of the incidents, and they often are split along racial lines. Whites tend either to downplay charges of police misconduct or to treat them as isolated incidents. Blacks generally lay

the blame on a historic and still-pervasive pattern of racist brutality.

In the Virginia Beach aftermath, for example, officials of the local NAACP cited police harassment and brutal overreaction as precipitating and exacerbating factors of the disturbance. Most whites condemned the flareup as a simple outbreak of savage lawlessness. Similarly, pundits in Chicago's mainstream media ascribe political motives to those black leaders complaining about police brutality.

"It has been hard to rally the troops, polarize the city, fill the seats and the collection plate at Operation PUSH when there has been little more to rail about than the bogeyman of a [Mayor Richard] Daley white media public-relations conspiracy," writes Thomas Hardy of the *Chicago Tribune*. "So influential black political leaders seized the police brutality issue as a way of stirring their 'movement' from inertia."

Analyses of this type infuriate black activists, who charge it is yet another way the white community attempts to devalue the perceptions of blacks. "We say the police are beating us, and the white media tells us we're lying and only doing it for political advantage," complains Oscar Worrill, a Chicago organizer active in police brutality issues.

Damning incidents: Accusations of racist law enforcement are longstanding in this notoriously segregated city, but the fledgling administration of Richard M. Daley—like that of his late father, Richard J.—is reluctant to lend credence to these complaints, ascribing most of the charges, like the *Tribune's* Hardy, to political motives. A series of recent incidents, however, has been too damning to dismiss.

In one, an African-American suspect died after "falling" down an elevator shaft while in custody in the Chicago police headquarters building. Another case involved two black teens who allegedly were picked up by two white police officers in the predominantly white neighborhood of Bridgeport, slapped around and told they didn't belong in the neighborhood before they were dropped off near a gang of whites who then assaulted them. Since this incident took place in Daley's neighborhood, the mayor was forced to respond. He promptly and thoroughly condemned the misconduct, while noting that it was an isolated incident.

The killing of a black alleged drug dealer by a black detective is another of Chicago's red-hot police brutality cases. This case is also significant for another question it brings to the fore. Can police brutality have a racist motive if the offending officer is black?

In fact, Chicago's African-American police superintendent, LeRoy Martin, argues that this year's increase in reported incidents of police brutality involves a preponderance of complaints against black officers. Predictably, most pundits for the city's major media cite this information as prima facie proof that charges of police racism are phony.

But according to experts on the matter, African-American police are just as vulnerable to racist attitudes as are their whites colleagues and may be even more prone to brutality. "There's really no mystery why some blacks in law enforcement are contemptuous of their own people,"

explains Dr. Alvin Poussaint, Harvard University psychiatrist and author of many books, including *Why Blacks Kill Blacks*. "Many black police have not only internalized the racist attitudes that are so pervasive in the law enforcement community, they also are victimized by the legacy of self-hatred."

A black Chicago cop who prefers anonymity says black officers know they can most easily gain favor with their peers and superiors by demonstrating their readiness to get tough with the black youth who command most of their attention. "For a little while in the late '70s black cops were becoming more sympathetic to those people who were being beat down by life, and relations were getting better," he notes. "But now, most of these new black guys, at least most of the new guys I've run into, have only contempt for their brothers and sisters in the community."

Constitution be damned: Many of these cops, however, are getting their cues from community residents who have lost all tolerance for those they perceive as being responsible for the declining quality of life in too many black neighborhoods. "I never thought I'd see the day when black citizens begin urging police around the country to violate the Constitution to apprehend suspected offenders," says Elsie Scott, executive director of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE).

"The community's outrage about the drug epidemic and the crime that accompanies it is very strong these

INSIDE STORY

days," Scott adds, "and I see no reason why that general attitude shouldn't also affect law enforcement officials." While Scott acknowledges the rippling effect of a less-tolerant social climate, she insists that NOBLE has found no increase in police brutality.

"Because of several widely reported incidents, we wanted to see if police brutality was indeed becoming a larger problem. So we compiled figures from around the country and found no appreciable increases in the rate of brutality complaints," she says. NOBLE is a 13-year-old group that was founded in part to help smooth the often frayed relations between law enforcement agencies and the black community. "We would be leading the charge for change if we had found a discernible pattern of police misconduct," Scott says.

The proliferation of these complaints even prompted the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights to convene a public briefing on the issue last month. Among those presenting evidence at the session was Don Jackson, a former police sergeant in Hawthorne, Calif., who gained nationwide attention earlier this year after a videotape showing him being brutalized by a white cop was broadcast nationally.

Jackson told the commission that police violence "is a common, everyday occurrence among young African-Americans," and he provided information on alleged police misconduct in several California cities. He said statistics on charges of police abuse are virtually useless because of the "creative report writing" and other methods of tampering with brutality complaints.

The hysteria created by the Bush administration's drug war has combined with attitudes of racial retrenchment left over from the Reagan era to once again target black youth as public enemy No. 1, first in the police departments' line of fire. For much of this country's history, however, that racist reality has been a fact; only the rationales have changed. Runaway slaves were the prototypical black victims of police brutality.

What makes it different this time is that African-Americans have reached the limits of their tolerance for what they perceive as racist treatment and are increasingly responding in ways that threaten civil disorder. It is a problem that will only escalate unless it finds a place on the national agenda and prompts a firm response from those who seek to avert increasing racial conflict. □

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By David R. Dye

MANAGUA, NICARAGUA

CENTRAL AMERICA IS IN THE MIDST OF AN election cycle. It started in March, when Alfredo Cristiani and his ARENA party swept the Christian Democrats out of power in El Salvador. Election races are currently underway in Costa Rica, Honduras and Nicaragua, where balloting is scheduled for next February 25. Depending on the outcomes, this election calendar may change the face of regional politics.

Of all the Central American contests, the Nicaraguan elections are the most unusual. They probably will not decide who holds power. Not only is it unlikely the Sandinistas will lose, but it is unclear what would happen if they did. Statements by Defense Minister Humberto Ortega that any new government would have to take the Sandinista armed forces as a given hint at the difficulties that would attend the full transfer of power from a revolutionary government to a decidedly disloyal opposition.

The election process, held under close international supervision, is nonetheless crucial to Nicaragua's future. It is, one can argue, an occasion for a revolutionary power structure to adapt itself to democratic electoral competition. The fact that for the first time since 1979 all political groups will be participating also provides an opportunity for national reconciliation in a society fractured by 10 years of radical change and U.S.-sponsored contra war. Last but not least, the legitimacy conferred on whatever government emerges will help the country negotiate the foreign funds it needs for its economic recovery.

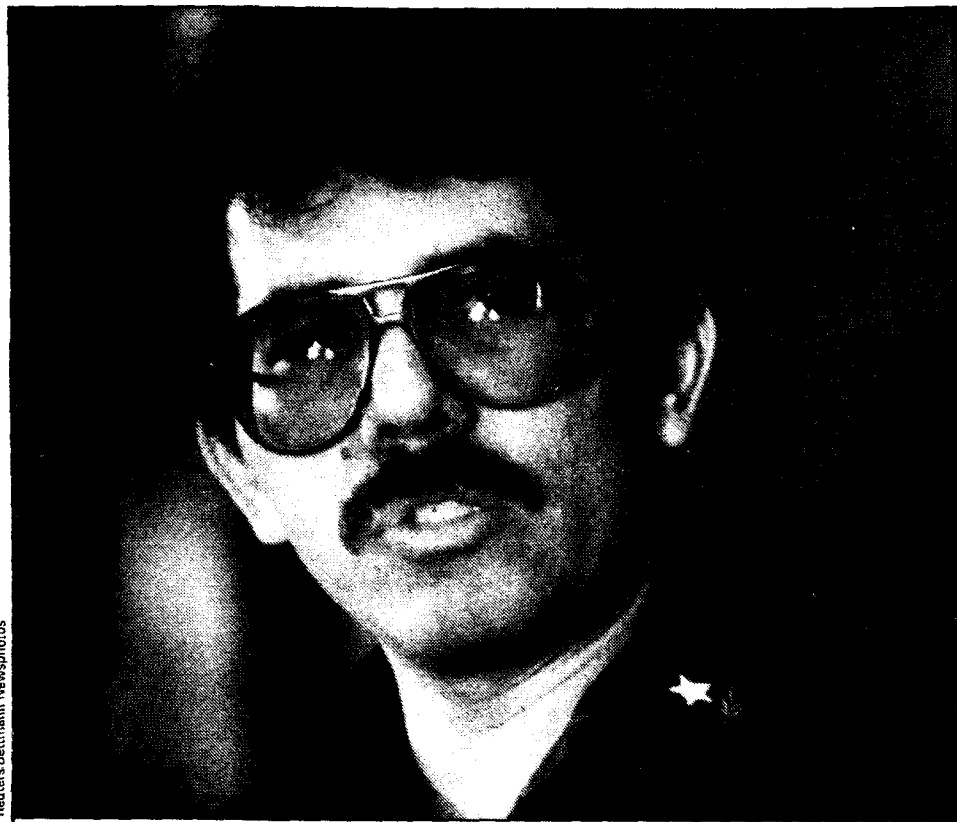
For the ruling Sandinista Front (FSLN), which has spent most of its 10 years in power besting the contras on the battlefield, the elections are a supreme political test. Their campaign slogan, "Everything Will Be Better!" aptly sums up the message the front will take to an electorate sagging under the weight of severe economic distress.

In the keynote address to a nominating convention September 24, FSLN founder and National Directorate member Tomás Borge promised Nicaraguans "an economy overflowing with health and unstoppable in its development" over the next 10 years. In terms of program, the Sandinistas are stressing continuity; they are still committed to a social revolution they have been unable to implement because of the contra war.

Battlefield to ballot box: But for the party as an organization, change is the order of the day. Its "Grand People's Convention" had the earmarks of a U.S.-style nominating meeting, complete with marching bands and a hall festooned with multicolored balloons. The presidential and vice-presidential nominees brought no surprises—Daniel Ortega and Sergio Ramirez are once again the Front's standard-bearers. But the conclave did touch up the party platform and amend from the floor a list of 90 legislative candidates. None of this has happened before.

The candidate selection process also reflected the new, more competitive political equation. Explains FSLN Vice Coordinator Bayardo Arce, "We saw that we had to put people on our lists who are not party militants, though they have identified themselves with the tasks of the revolution." The

Nicaragua vote aims at reconciliation, economic aid



Reuters/Bettmann Newsphotos

Ortega's campaign will be scrutinized as it aims at Sandinista legitimacy.

FSLN effort to broaden its base means that nearly a quarter of its National Assembly nominees will be non-party. Meanwhile, local party bodies, converted in "Electoral Action Committees," are gearing up for municipal races as well—another of this year's novelties.

The reasons for taking the election so seriously are cogent. Unlike the 1984 contest, when the Sandinistas were swept into power with a two-thirds majority, the front faces a total of eight candidates as well as an opposition organized, at least skeletally, on a national scale. The biggest contender, the National Opposition Union (UNO), is admittedly a congeries of 14 groupings, ranging from the extreme entrepreneurial right to the orthodox Communist Party, held together by little more than a common resentment of the Sandinistas and the glimmer of a chance to unseat them. But that's a lot more than the Sandinistas had to face last time around.

Still, UNO's presidential nominee, Violeta Chamorro, has some decided political assets. One is the popular memory of her slain husband, Pedro Joaquín, editor of the opposition daily *La Prensa*, whose 1978 killing was ordered by Anastasio Somoza. Another is her close friendship with such Latin American leaders as Venezuela's Carlos Andrés Pérez, who has given her newspaper financial help. But the most crucial—and the key to unlocking the treasure chest of funds for UNO's campaign—is the favor of the Bush administration.

One of many: Doña Violeta, as she is called, will need all of this, plus a good bit of candidate coaching. A lady of breeding, obviously ill at ease in front of peasants, she gave a highly inept campaign speech at an initial rally, held in the province of Chontales, whose rural population has supported the contras. UNO's rhetoric also is highly negative—labeling the Sandinistas as dictators and blaming them for the country's

economic decline—but offers little in a positive vein for people to latch onto.

With some expert advice, these problems could be solved. The more serious questions about the alliance backing Chamorro are different. Will UNO—"one" in Spanish—remain "one" throughout the campaign fight? Historically, the parties composing it have displayed alarming tendencies toward political cell-division, to the point where some are now true microorganisms. So far, however, UNO has stuck together, despite strains and official predictions of a noisy breakup.

Another problem is organization. None of the UNO parties has much capacity on its own to mobilize voters. Yet unity may have the power to multiply the proverbial fishes. Luis Guzmán, editor of the independent weekly paper *La Crónica*, argues that "UNO is larger than the sum of its parts—a lot of people are joining it who have no party affiliation but want to be active." His contention is backed up by ordinary conversations and by various survey findings, including those from the Nicaraguan Institute of Public Opinion, showing that a "united opposition" attracts substantially more votes—up to a third in urban areas—than the parties individually.

Perhaps the key question is whether Nicaraguans see UNO as the "united opposition" it claims to be. If they don't, a determined effort will be mounted to change their minds. U.S. money, and the candidate-packaging and voter mobilization it can bring, have a significant potential to shape Nicaraguan voters' decisions next February.

Compared with money spent on the U.S. elections, the \$3 million Bush wanted Congress to float to UNO through the National Endowment for Democracy looms as an exceedingly large political advantage. "Look at it in proportion to population and you'll see that it's equivalent to \$250 million in the U.S., twice as much as both parties combined

spent in their 1988 races," says former CIA agent David MacMichaels. In fact, Bush's people are talking of far larger sums, funneled directly or surreptitiously.

The Sandinistas acknowledge that the money will have an impact. Nicaraguan foreign ministry official Sophia Clark, who has analyzed the matter extensively, says, "I don't believe they can buy a victory for Doña Violeta, but she can be packaged for TV and made into a charismatic candidate. We're going to have a real campaign."

Although it is obvious foreign interference, the Sandinistas have accepted as legal outside funding for their opponents' political races. In part, this is bowing before a fait accompli. But they also realize that for the elections to be deemed legitimate, it is better if the opposition cannot complain it lost because it didn't have the means to wage a real fight.

Observers in the breach: Similar political thinking lies behind the acceptance of foreign observers, the most important of whom will probably be former U.S. President Jimmy Carter. Nicaragua's electoral process is shaping up to be one of the most highly scrutinized campaigns in recent history, with a swarm of individuals and organizations monitoring each stage. Though the government might like to limit the oversight role to the U.N. and the Organization of American States, it knows those bodies have little clout in Washington, where opinion about the election most needs to be swayed. So when Carter came to town this month, the FSLN rolled out the red carpet.

Most impartial observers think the Sandinista front still has enough support to win the elections with a clear plurality, though not necessarily an absolute majority, of the vote. If they can survive the opposition and a new round of destabilization—which may include, in some areas, intimidation of peasant voters by remaining bands of contras—as well as persuade the world their mandate is legitimate, the Sandinistas hope to see the doors opening for achievement of two more of their cherished objectives.

One is the cementing of a political setup where all parties participate permanently and keep their grievances in the open arena of politics. Argues Sophia Clark, "The possibilities for authentic national reconciliation are infinitely greater than they were five or six years ago, when pushing the contra war created a polarization in Nicaragua—people were looking at where the U.S. was placing its bets." In this argument, with the contras no longer an option, Nicaragua's anti-revolutionary right would have no choice but to drop its penchant for abstaining and join in the political struggle.

The other is the now-acknowledged key to a better economic picture for Nicaraguans over the next decade. Facing reporters September 26, Ortega expressed his conviction that immediately after the election, European countries will open up new funds for the postwar Nicaraguan reconstruction. This requires, Ortega implied, that the U.S. come to a political understanding with Nicaragua—something he also believes is inevitable.

With so much riding on it, Nicaragua's 1990 election may well become the political event of the new decade in Central America. □
David R. Dye reports regularly on Central America for *In These Times*.

INSHORT

By Joel Bleifuss

Turf wars

Since the outbreak of the new and improved war on drugs, there has been a lot of talk about avoiding the turf battles that have plagued previous federal enforcement efforts. But the nature of those battles remains unclear. Florida Attorney General Bob Butterworth sheds light on the subject in an op-ed piece in the *Miami Herald*. He writes: "Until now, the federal government has approached the drug problem from four directions: law enforcement, military, diplomacy and intelligence. Of the four, diplomacy and intelligence have been most responsible for the well-documented turf battles characterizing the federal effort. Federal prosecutors and others have told of drug-related enforcement actions that were hampered, if not shut down, due to diplomatic niceties. Similarly, there is significant evidence that intelligence agencies not only have resisted supplying information about certain drug-related activities to law enforcement but in some instances have shielded known drug runners."

Serving two masters: Butterworth might have been referring to, among others, the case of John Hull, a 69-year-old Costa Rican rancher. From October 1984 to September 1985, Hull received \$10,000 a month from Oliver North to provide "humanitarian assistance" to the contras who were fighting in southern Nicaragua. During that period Hull's 5,000-acre ranch and its six airplane runways were used as a contra resupply base. It is alleged that Hull helped finance the resupply effort by turning his ranch into a refueling station for South American drug traffickers.

Cover-up: On May 14, 1986, Jeffery Feldman, an assistant U.S. attorney in Miami, recommended to the Justice Department that a grand jury be convened to investigate "criminal activities including gun-running and Neutrality [Act] violations" by the contra supply network. His superior, U.S. District Attorney Leon Kellner, added this note to Feldman's report: "I ... concur that we have sufficient evidence to ask for a grand jury." On May 20, then-Attorney General Edwin Meese—who had previously instructed Kellner to "proceed very, very slowly" in his investigation of gun-running and cocaine trafficking—convinced the U.S. attorney to change Feldman's memorandum to read: "At present it would be premature to take this matter to a grand jury.... A grand jury at this point would represent a fishing expedition." In 1987 Feldman testified before the Iran-contra select committee, "I was told that the National Security Council had been in touch with Mr. Hull ... that Ronald Reagan knows who John Hull is ... that certain agencies have their operational requirement ... and it is not fair for other agencies to interfere."

The Kerry committee: Sen. John Kerry's (D-MA) subcommittee on terrorism, narcotics and international operations has spent the past three years looking into allegations of the contra-cocaine connection. According to a subcommittee report released in April, five people have testified that Hull was involved in drug trafficking. One of them, Gary Betzner, swore that in two instances Hull and he both watched cocaine being loaded onto a small plane. Another was drug runner George Morales, who said he helped smuggle 163 kilos of cocaine from Hull's ranch to Miami. According to Morales, the CIA helped facilitate the drugs-for-guns exchange. Kerry's subcommittee was unable to subpoena Hull because he hid behind his Costa Rican citizenship.

An arrest: Last January 13 Costa Rican police arrested Hull, charging him with drug trafficking and violating neutrality laws that prohibit supplying arms to the contras. Two weeks later 17 members of Congress, including Rep. Lee Hamilton (D-IN), co-chairman of the Iran-contra select committee, wrote a letter to Costa Rica's president Oscar Arias Sanchez. Expressing their concern, the Congress members conveyed a veiled threat that read in part: "It is our hope that Mr. Hull's case can be concluded promptly and that it will be handled in a manner that will not complicate U.S.-Costa Rican relations.... We thus want to avoid situations or incidents that could adversely affect our relations at this time." President Arias replied: "I deeply regret your letter.... Mr. John Hull is accused of serious crimes, including participating in the illegal traffick of drugs to the U.S. It pains me that you insinuate that the exemplary relations between your country and mine could deteriorate because our legal system is fighting against drug trafficking, no matter how powerful the people who participate in it, or what external backing they might have." Hull was held in prison until March, when, due to a heart condition, he was released on \$37,500 bail. On July 18, shortly before his



Agence France-Presse

Quayle Stresses Human Rights at Meeting in San Salvador

Vice President Dan Quayle with Defense Minister Gen. Humberto Laris, left, and Col. Emilio Ponce, Army Chief of Staff, in San Salvador, where he also

met with Roberto d'Aubuisson, the rightist leader. Mr. Quayle is holding a Soviet-made flame thrower reportedly confiscated from guerrillas. Page 3.



Agence France-Presse

Quayle Meets With Salvadoran Leaders

Vice President Dan Quayle with Defense Minister Gen. Humberto Laris, left, and Col. Emilio Ponce, Army Chief of Staff, in San Salvador, where he also

met with Roberto d'Aubuisson, the rightist leader. Mr. Quayle is holding a Soviet-made grenade launcher reportedly taken from guerrillas. Page A3.

A thousand words: Some savvy editor working on the late edition of the June 14 *New York Times* realized that Dan Quayle did not look as if he was stressing human rights. What the editor didn't catch is that our vice president is pointing the grenade launcher at himself.

White flight to Vegemite

CANBERRA, AUSTRALIA—One ominous outcome of the slow dismantling of

apartheid is that Australia is blithely accepting thousands of South African whites seeking refuge. Virtually no public discourse has occurred here on the wisdom of taking them, nor on their likely impact on a society that is painfully confronting its

own racist legacy.

According to official immigration figures, about half of approximately 40,000 South Africans to settle here since World War II have arrived in the last six years. The intake has shot up recently to more than 5,000 a

year, or about 5 percent of all immigrants. Virtually all the South Africans have been white: most are of British descent, about a quarter are Jewish (more now move here than to Israel), few have been Afrikaners.

Until recently, strict Australian immigration policy made entry difficult, even for family reunion. But since 1983, a new "skilled labor" category has rewarded the kinds of professional and trade skills that whites monopolize under apartheid—like apartheid itself, the category effectively excludes virtually all blacks.

The government of Prime Minister Robert Hawke has eased policies for refugees from apartheid. "That's a diplomatic exercise," says Amelia Ventura, secretary of the African Peoples Organization in Sydney. "It's no use announcing it in Australia. In South Africa, black people have no idea how to get to Australia." Meanwhile, many large corporations here have gone headhunting for South African executives. One major accounting firm lured 50 accountants here on just one 1986 recruiting foray.

White South Africans hear from friends and relatives that Australia is an amenable destination. Once newcomers arrive here, a loose network of well-connected South Africans eases their transition. Large social clubs host nostalgic gatherings. Many South African immigrants, Jewish or not, use private Jewish schools to preserve the educational styles and content they favored back home. Captive domestic help, alas, is harder to come by.

African National Congress (ANC)

policy is to encourage educated whites, who have most profited from South Africa's resources, to stay. "The future South Africa would need these people to make a contribution," says Eddie Funde, the ANC's Australian representative. "If they are racists, well, that's something we'll have to deal with." In South Africa, where bailing out is derided as the "chicken run," the ruling regime also discourages migration.

Still, disparagement of migration is clearly stronger in South Africa than here in the host country. "At the moment," says Funde, "there hasn't been any significant or visible public opposition here." One explanation for the lack of resistance to the influx is that Australians unconsciously see white South Africans as fellow colonials.

Nineteen eighty-eight, which marked the bicentennial of British settlement, was a year of sprawling self-congratulation here. It was, however, a "year of mourning" for Aboriginal Australians, who have focused on a protracted federal inquiry into more than 100 deaths of Aboriginals in custody. In April 1989, in a historic statement, Hal Wootten, the judge heading the investigation, described the deaths as a direct outcome of a policy of assimilation, abandoned during the '70s, that had been tantamount to genocide. With such growing official soul-baring, sovereignty treaties and compensation are growing possibilities. At the same time, protests against current prejudice and past wrongs are becoming increasingly militant.

Naiveté also helps explain the lack

of opposition to white South African migration. The newcomers are profiting from a characteristic Australian willingness to give the benefit of the doubt. That is ironic in this case because while Australians' judgment is suspended, many white South Africans interviewed about their lives here express a haughty disdain for Australians' "laziness."

Overall, Australia appears caught in two minds about South Africa. The Hawke government, for example, has indirectly financed the ANC and recognized it as the representative of black South Africans, though not diplomatically. It has at times slowed the processing of visas for South Africans, much angering headhunters and companies here. It has also been pushing the country, against its British-colony grain, toward "multicultural tolerance." The initiative has amounted to more than political blather. Hawke perceived and wisely supported Australians' growing acceptance of non-European cultures. Black Africans here have been as warmly received as any group.

At the same time, however, black immigrants have been continually harassed by right-wing extremists that Australia's conservative leaders have been slow to disparage. This is a clear sign of growing, broadening antipathy to non-European, particularly Asian, immigration. Hawke may be defeated in elections that must be held this year or next, and the conservative government has already begun to stoke a growing nostalgia here for the "white Australia policy" that operated until the '70s.

—Peter Monaghan

Security leaks and loyalist killings

BELFAST, U.K.—When Northern Ireland's Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), a loyalist paramilitary group sponsored by the Ulster Defense Association (UDA), admitted killing 28-year-old Loughlin Maginn last month, they claimed he was a "legitimate" target. According to the UFF, their victim, who was shot as he sat watching television with his wife in Rathfriland, County Down, was a "liaison officer for the IRA." Faced with furious denials from Maginn's friends and family, the UDA's efforts to legitimize the killing have stirred up a security scandal that has been waiting to burst.

As far as the nationalist community is concerned, Maginn, a poultry farmer, was just another victim of loyalist assassins who regard Catholics in general, not just republicans, as fair game. "Once again we have a very young man with a young wife and family being killed simply because he was a Catholic," said local Social Democratic and Labour Party Member of Parliament Eddie McGrady, who represents Down South. Maginn is the 37th person killed by loyalists since the beginning of 1988, three of whom were acknowledged IRA members. (In the same period, the IRA killed 102 people—52 members of security forces, 50 civilians.)

The loyalists, determined to challenge their reputation as irrational killers, invited BBC's Belfast reporter, Chris Moore, to a rendezvous with representatives of the UDA to see documentation of Loughlin Maginn's IRA involvement.

At the meeting site, Moore was met by four armed men in balaclavas who showed him a videotape that the UDA representatives claimed was taken inside a security base. The tape showed a number of photographs of IRA suspects, including Maginn, pinned on an office wall. Other documents listed Maginn among a number of people described as "heavily traced as an IRA suspect." Police officials admit that the documents look like those used by the security forces and British army intelligence.

On September 11, three men, two of them members of the army's Ulster Defense Regiment (UDR), were arrested and charged with the murder of Maginn. The exact nature of their relationship with the UFF paramilitaries is unclear, but nationalist organizations have claimed for years that there is a crossover of personnel as well as arms and information between the UDR and the loyalist forces. The UFF denied that the men worked with their organization but have not revoked their claim to have killed Maginn.

In the light of the Maginn case,

John Cope, the Northern Ireland defense minister, has admitted that leaks have taken place. He announced a police investigation into leaks to loyalists and pledged that anyone passing information "will be prosecuted with the full severity of the law."

But faith in the British government's commitment to confront "leakers" was immediately shaken when it was announced that an army corporal convicted of leaking documents to a loyalist terror squad earlier this year had been returned to duty after only four months suspension.

Corporal Cameron Hastie of the 1st Battalion, the Royal Scots, was convicted in May of passing on names, addresses, car numbers and photographs of republican suspects to a member of the paramilitary Ulster Volunteer Force. He was given an 18-month suspended sentence but is today back at work as a training instructor at a depot in England.

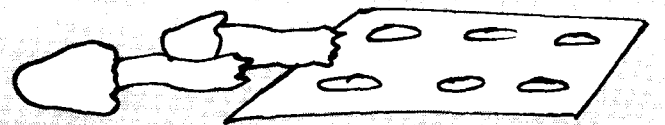
To cap that off, on September 15, the very day that Northern Ireland Secretary Peter Brooke was meeting with Irish Foreign Minister Gerry Collins to discuss issues raised by intelligence leaks, it was announced in Belfast that another list of 12 "IRA suspects" had disappeared from one of the Royal Ulster Constabulary high-security barracks.

—Laura Flanders

case was scheduled to go to trial, Hull jumped bail and turned up in Miami. He then flew by private plane to his family's farm in Gibson County, Ind.

Costa Rican inquiry: Two days after he fled, a special drug commission of the Costa Rican legislature released a report detailing both Hull's support for the contra's "southern front" and the allegations that he was one link in what has become known as the "contra-cocaine connection." The special commission concluded: "The amount of and the frequency with which drugs moved through [Costa Rica] were the factors that motivated this commission to study the [contra support network]. The private network that supported the Nicaraguan resistance used a number of people, both public and private, in order to achieve its goals. In Costa Rica's case, the network 'chose' Mr. John Hull and several experienced Costa Rican pilots. ... The facts detailed here show that narcotraffickers had infiltrated different levels of the network that offered military support to the contras. ... Costa Rica was used as a bridge for the transportation of cocaine into the U.S. and Mexico. Narcotraffickers used precisely the same airstrips and collaborated with the same Costa Rican authorities that supported the contras."

Charges dropped: The Costa Rican legal system requires that statements used in court must be made in Costa Rica, and two of the principal witnesses, Betzner and Morales, are unwilling to go to Costa Rica and testify against Hull because Costa Rica does not grant immunity from prosecution in exchange for testimony. In early August the drug trafficking charges against Hull were dropped pending further evidence. Hull is still wanted by Costa Rica for neutrality violations, and the judge in charge of the case has declared Hull a fugitive and asked that he be extradited from the U.S. to stand trial. And now that Hull is in the U.S., Sen. Kerry has a few questions he would like to ask him. Jonathan Winer, counsel for the senator, told Peter Brennan of the *Tico Times* of San Jose, Costa Rica, that the subcommittee will once again try to subpoena Hull because previous testimony "suggested Hull has relevant information [about drug trafficking]."



On the high sea

Hallucinogenic drugs are experiencing a renaissance. Paying scant attention to the fuming of their elders, college students and urban/suburban clubbers have rediscovered LSD, psilocybin mushrooms and mescaline. So, too, have members of the U.S. Navy. Craig Collins writes in the libertarian magazine *Reason* that drug dealers in port cities report that sales of hallucinogenic drugs to sailors are booming. The Navy has instituted an aggressive testing program aimed at keeping pot-smoking sailors away from heavy artillery. Drugs like LSD have an advantage over marijuana in that they metabolize quickly and are not picked up on urine tests.

View from the right

Critics of U.S. drug policy are a varied lot. Take William F. Buckley, for instance. He is remembered for sailing his yacht out into international waters so he could legally smoke a joint. (How he skirted the laws against possession is unclear.) Buckley recently weighed in with his opinion of the war on drugs: "[I]t is the duty of conservatives to declaim against lost causes when the ancillary results of pursuing them are tens of thousands of innocent victims and a gradual corruption of the state." A generation, and half a continent, removed from Buckley is conservative student journalist Jeff Renander, editor of the Iowa City-based *Campus Review*—the Midwest cousin of the *Dartmouth Review*. He told *In These Times*, "I don't see a consensus on the drug issue in the conservative movement. Some on our staff do drugs, and some don't." According to Renander, drug use among *Campus Review* staffers ranges from "alcohol to psychedelics." And some of his staff members will be participating in the upcoming National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) demonstrations. Renander says distinctions should be made between crack and more user-friendly illicit substances. "With just marijuana and mushrooms, people don't go around and kill each other."

By David Collins

HAYWARD, WIS.

Wisconsin's walleye war

A POPULAR T-SHIRT ON CHIPPEWA reservations in northern Wisconsin reads, "I survived the 1989 spearfishing season." While the slogan may sound humorous, it was no joke to fishers who were met night after night last spring by as many as 1,000 angry protesters who hurled insults as well as rocks from the shores Wisconsin's lakes from one side of the state to the other.

The protesters claim that 19th-century treaties, along with recent court decisions that do not place specific catch limits on Chippewa fishers, create "two sets of rights," and point to Wisconsin's untimely implementation of a decade-old plan to reduce catch limits for sport fishers.

At the height of the spearfishing protests, high-speed boats circled the fishers, causing dangerous wakes meant to capsize their flat-bottomed fishing boats. Protesters slapped oars at the water alongside the tribal boats to disrupt their fishing efforts. Shoreline bushes hid slingshooters who launched ballbearings, and tribal members, police and supporters were hit with rocks.

At the landings, protesters yelled "Timber Niggers" at tribal members, while signs urged, "Spear an Indian—save a walleye." More than 150 arrests resulted from the conflict, including one for use of firearms. One man was arrested with 12 pipe bombs on him after a loud explosion triggered a search of the shoreline.

Go fish: As cooler weather returns to northern Wisconsin, some Chippewa bands are announcing plans to resume spearing. While protests aren't expected to contain the same volatile dynamic as the springtime events, the conflict has by no means cooled

off. Chippewa boats were harassed throughout the summer as Indians tended fishing nets in north central Wisconsin.

The protesters have won some political support, including that of Wisconsin's Republican Party Chairman Donald Stitt, who in early September urged an anti-treaty group to continue its protests at the boat landings. "Any time you have people down there demonstrating, I believe they have a right to be down at those landings. And if this issue is not resolved, I hope you're down there again," Stitt told the group.

Some observers of the conflict say mob violence is being tolerated to put pressure on tribal members to give up or lease the rights they reserved when they ceded land to the U.S. in the 19th century.

Traditionally courts recognize Indian sovereignty and treaty rights unless they have been modified by a "clear and plain" act of Congress.

A key ruling for the Chippewa tribes was the 1978 Voigt decision that prevents Wisconsin from regulating the tribe's off-reservation hunting, fishing and gathering in ceded territories. Last spring that ruling was further clarified when U.S. District Judge Barbara Crabb ruled the tribes can take as many fish as they need, provided they don't deplete the stock. The state's biologists are charged with determining what would deplete the stock.

Anti-treaty protesters, who claim these court rulings create "two sets of rights" for tribal members and for others, have called for "equal rights"—essentially a euphemism for abrogating all treaty rights. In her ruling, Crabb said a vague sense of equity cannot

override the tribes' written guarantees of resources.

The anti-treaty protesters also claim the tribal fishery hurts Wisconsin's tourism industry. Tribal fishers, however, harvested

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well under their proposed catch of 50,000 walleye this spring, compared to the 800,000 taken by sport fishers each year.

While police worked riot duty to protect the Chippewa fishers in Vilas, Oneida, Douglas, Polk, Lincoln and other counties, spear-



Spearheading the treaty fight: members of Wisconsin's Lac du Flambeau reservation.

fishers in Sawyer County were relatively untouched by violence. There, the Lac Courte Oreilles (LCO) band took the lead in limiting their projected walleye catch and resort owners as much as told the anti-treaty groups to stay away.

The state has tried to convince the tribes, as well as the anti-treaty groups, that the high road to resolution of the dispute is leasing the rights from the tribes. Neither side, however, seems interested in settling the dispute with such an agreement.

Common ground: But opposition to a lease agreement may be the one issue on which anti-treaty groups and the tribes agree. Only two of the six Chippewa bands in Wisconsin have negotiated with the state, and one of the bands broke off talks this past summer. The one band still negotiating, Lac du Flambeau, is being offered a 10-year, \$42 million lease. But many Flambeau members oppose the lease, saying their heritage "is not for sale."

Anti-treaty groups also oppose such a settlement, arguing that the dispute is a matter for the U.S. Congress. The groups hope to intensify their opposition with a statewide billboard campaign later this fall.

Groups including Witness for Non-Violence, the Lake Superior Green Party and HONOR, a major national treaty support organization, are scrambling to distribute what they see as the only remedy to the conflict—information. They hope to inform the public of the cultural, legal and biological realities of the situation before it leads any further into what anti-treaty organizer Larry Peterson believes is inevitable. "Down the road, and even to a point now, there could be racism involved," he said. "But it has been created by the inequality of the issue itself."

David Collins is a broadcaster at WOJB radio in Reserve, Wis.

From warriors to warhorses—AIM looks back on two decades

By Monika Bauerlein

THE AMERICAN INDIAN MOVEMENT (AIM) turned 21 last month, and to most of the several hundred members and supporters who gathered to celebrate, the birthday marked a turning point—from which the movement can head either into a midlife crisis or toward a new maturity.

"AIM has been a baby, and it's been an adolescent," California AIM member Tom Leblanc told guests at the four-day celebration held in Minneapolis' Fort Snelling State Park. "We've gone through those growing pains. Twenty-one years—in white society that's when you grow up. Indian way, you become a parent."

According to most accounts, AIM began in 1968 in a jail cell in Stillwater, Minn. Four years later, AIM supporters took over the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C. The following year, a takeover of Wounded Knee, S.D., ended with massive intervention by federal troops. As headlines and TV pictures flashed around the world, AIM became the best-known exponent of a reborn "spirit of Crazy Horse" among native peoples.

AIM has changed considerably since the mid-'70s. Many of its original leaders are in jail or dead; others have grown disillusioned

with the movement they once endorsed. Although AIM groups continue to work in Minnesota, the Dakotas, California and elsewhere, they face a changed political scene: critics say they have not responded to new challenges.

Threats to Indian people, community leaders say, may be greater now than at any time in the last two decades. Cuts in social programs have affected many Indian-oriented projects, from education funding to self-governed housing programs. Tribal leaders say they fear a new push to terminate some now-sovereign tribes. And natural resources on and off reservations, from uranium in Arizona to fish and deer in Wisconsin, have become the target of pressure to abrogate treaty rights.

In these battles, grass-roots organizers frequently carry the fight. Their local activities do not attract the nationwide media attention AIM provoked in its heyday. Meanwhile, the former newsmakers frequently sit on the sidelines, observers rather than players in the new disputes.

On the White Earth Chippewa reservation in Minnesota this past summer, traditional elder Jim Weaver staged a seven-week fast to protest his tribal government. Although White Earth is home to several prominent

AIM leaders. Weaver and his supporters refused to call in the movement from Minneapolis.

"I just don't want those guys up here," Weaver said. "All they do is come in and take things over. A lot of people here don't like that."

But five weeks into the hunger strike, Weaver and his supporters invited AIM to join them. Clyde Bellecourt, an AIM leader and White Earth tribal member, said his Minneapolis group had been watching the hunger strike but declined to join Weaver uninvited.

"It's one of our principles: we never go anywhere if we're not asked. It's always the families on the reservations that ask us to come and help them," he said.

Since its inception, AIM has modeled itself after the traditional "warrior society," coming in wherever Indian people call for help. AIM became a household name to activists and federal counterinsurgency agents alike after its 1972 takeover of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. But in less-spectacular actions, AIM

The "fire crew" activism of the American Indian Movement still responds to alarms of injustice.

members frequently turned up on reservations and in urban areas to protest abuses against Indian people.

"Someone was raped, someone was arrested, someone was robbed—we'd get into a car and go there," Leblanc said. "We'd take guns, lawyers, tape recorders, food or a little of each."

Critics say that kind of "fire crew" activism has not always been the group's most effective strategy. AIM members have sometimes been eyed suspiciously by local tribal members who saw them as outsiders to their struggle. In most cases, however, AIM ended up enlisting local support.

Whatever the criticism of its strategy, AIM achieved some of its goals. The publicity its actions aroused helped pass a slew of Indian-oriented legislation, such as the Indian Religious Freedom Act, which legalized traditional ceremonies, and laws providing increased funding for Indian education. More importantly, members say, AIM reminded the American public of the forgotten nations on the continent.

"Before AIM, a lot of people thought there were no more Indians," said Minneapolis leader Vernon Bellecourt. It was a shock to them to see that the Indians were still around, and that they were not going to go away."

For its birthday powwow, AIM attracted hundreds of supporters, many from outside the Indian community. Fort Snelling, the celebration site, was once an internment

Continued on page 10

By David Moberg

CHICAGO

FOR THE PAST FOUR DECADES, AMERICAN agriculture has undergone a chemical revolution that has radically transformed farming, helped drive many farmers off the land and seriously damaged the nation's health and environment. Now, growing numbers of farmers and agricultural experts believe, a biological revolution can create a more environmentally benign and "sustainable" agriculture.

But this biological revolution may be slowed or distorted if its development is left simply to market forces and big agribusinesses. Also, though small- to moderate-scale farmers may often be best able to practice the new biologically sensitive agriculture, making farming environmentally sound will not by itself guarantee family farms or a viable rural society.

Weaning farmers from their chemical dependence got an establishment stamp of approval with the publication in September of *Alternative Agriculture* by the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences (NAS). The work of a panel of prominent academics, the report concluded that there would be widespread economic and environmental gains if the alternative agriculture now practiced by a small number of farmers displaced the dominant chemically intensive techniques.

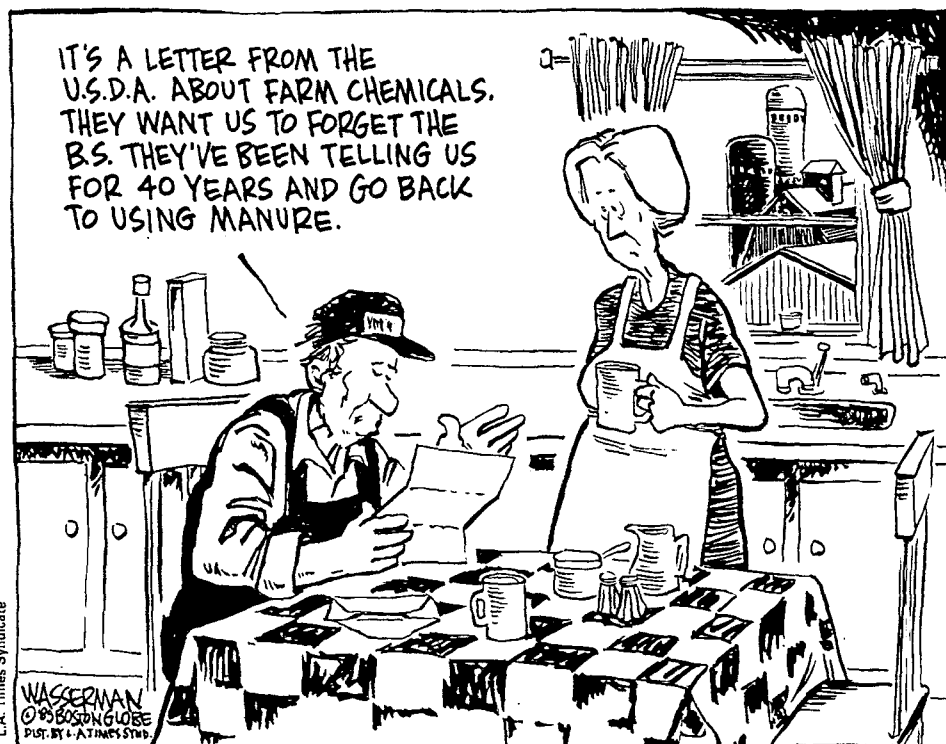
Current federal farm policy discourages such a shift, the report argued, but public research and promotion of alternative agriculture systems would be essential. Alternative agriculture is broadly defined as farming that relies on carefully managing production to take advantage of biological processes. That includes encouragement of natural predators on pests; enriching the soil through rotation of crops and application of animal manure; reducing frequently harmful and expensive commercial fertilizer, pesticides, antibiotics and other chemicals; and more appropriate, soil- and water-conserving matches of crops to the land.

Another label, "sustainable agriculture," implies that current practices can't be perpetuated. After only a few decades of chemically intensive farming the warnings are more than clear: much of the nation's farmland depleted, rural water seriously endangered, farmers and farmworkers suffering higher rates of cancer, traces of carcinogens in most food. Genetic diversity critical to the biological revolution is threatened with extermination of wild plants and animals, and the use of pesticides has often simply created new, more intractable problems (for example, 24 or the 25 top agricultural pests in California now are "secondary" pests that emerged after chemical suppression of primary pests).

To be sustainable, agriculture must also be productive and profitable. NAS makes it clear that alternative agriculture will not mean food shortages or economic collapse for farmers. But other experts warn that there could be some price increases as farmers abandon practices that offer short-term profitability, surpluses and low prices but dump huge unaccounted costs on the environment—possibly \$40 billion a year just from surface water pollution and soil erosion.

Fertile examples: Consider Richard and Sharon Thompson's farm. It's about average in size for central Iowa but quite unusual in most other ways. The Thompsons use very small amounts of commercial fertilizers and almost no chemical pesticides. They rotate hay, oats and pasture with the corn and soy-

High-chem farming is getting back to earth



beans instead of planting a typical monoculture of soil-depleting row crops. Keeping with a dying tradition, they also have hogs and cattle that stay healthy and free of antibiotics by having sunshine and fresh air instead of being confined in the typical industrial-style feedlots. Their manure enriches the Thompson fields. Careful mechanical cultivation of small ridges in the field where the crops grow controls weeds without herbicides.

The results? The Thompsons' yields are above and their costs of production far below average for the county. They have

AGRICULTURE

minimal weed and pest problems in their fields and disease in their livestock herds. Soil erosion is far less than half the rate typical for the county. And the farm is a debt-free financial success.

Yet most farmers now spend more on fertilizer and pesticides than on seeds, fuel and other variable costs. Pesticide use increased 170 percent from 1964 to 1982. Meanwhile the Thompson-style integrated crop and livestock farm once typical in the Midwest disintegrated. Many farms produced just soybeans and corn. Huge animal feedlots, often relocated to the Southwest and increasingly under direct or indirect corporate control, rapidly dominated meat production.

Many sustainable agriculture practices require careful observation, management and timing as well as skill. With bigger operations, the trend has been towards mechanization, uniformity and simplicity. That permits the farmer to handle more acres or animals or to rely on low-skilled hired workers without having to pay close attention to the peculiarities of the land, the early emergence of a pest problem or the health of a particular animal. Capital, management and labor become separate functions, not united in the individual farm family.

In theory new or smaller-scale farmers can compete better by using sustainable agriculture techniques. They can reduce their capital and input costs. Since they typically are just as efficient as big farmers but don't have the financial clout to buy supplies or borrow

money on the same terms, "these [alternative] systems allow smaller farms to provide full-time incomes," argues Center for Rural Affairs policy analyst Chuck Hassebrook.

But Patrick Madden, a consultant and director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's pilot project on Low Input Sustainable Agriculture, cautions that sustainable agriculture does not automatically give advantages to small-scale active managers. Some practices are so "laid back," like establishing a favorable climate for pest predators, such as ladybugs, that some "farmers are using less labor for low-input methods than it takes to spray," he said. Also, as the techniques become less art and more science, he warns, the natural advantages to the skilled farmer may decline.

The better, the worse: Hassebrook criticizes the NAS report for focusing only on the environmental issues. "In their definition of sustainable agriculture, they don't go the added necessary step to talk about agriculture that is socially sustainable, that maintains opportunity in agriculture for more people than those born into wealthy families," he said. "There's a tendency to assume that practices we call sustainable agriculture are both good for the environment and good socially, but it's not necessary and unavoidable."

Under federal farm policy farmers are penalized for shifting out of a price-supported crop like corn to a soil-building crop like alfalfa. And they are rewarded for pouring on chemicals to boost yields even though there may be a huge crop surplus.

There is also the threat that the biological bandwagon may get steered in the wrong direction or slowed down. NAS warned that private companies may not want to develop products that don't create an ongoing, dependent market. "Ironically," the report concluded, "the more effective and long-term a biological system of pest control is, the more difficult it can be to interest a private company in making the necessary investments in bringing the product to the marketplace." Biological control techniques, necessarily tailored to specific areas, aren't easily mass-marketed.

Madden offered a "graphic example of the need for public sector involvement." The federal Agricultural Research Service discovered and helped disseminate a half dozen natural pests that within a decade virtually eliminated the need to spray for the alfalfa weevil in the northeastern United States. A private entrepreneur recently told him that her firm had discovered a perfect natural enemy for controlling another pest. But it would form self-sustaining colonies immediately and thus could only be sold once. The firm never released the predator. "It's in the public interest to figure out profitable, productive alternatives to chemicals," Madden said. "It's not in the interests of private firms, whose profits are keyed to the sale of insecticides."

The best protection against pests is developing resistant crops, NAS argued. Although biotechnological alteration of plants and animals is in itself controversial, the new gene-altering methods could speed creation of pest-resistant strains. But currently at least 33 companies are working furiously to develop herbicide-resistant plants, thus threatening to extend the chemical farming era and actually increase the use of increasingly dangerous pesticides, warns Texas Department of Agriculture analyst Lynne McAnelly. In recent years, chemical companies have bought seed companies with the hope that they can market as a package their own herbicides and patented herbicide-resistant seeds.

Current federal farm policy works against sustainable agriculture because farmers are penalized for even momentarily shifting out of a price-supported crop, like corn, to a soil-building crop, like alfalfa. And they are rewarded for pouring on fertilizers and chemicals if that will boost yields and farm program payments, even though there may be a huge crop surplus. Proponents of the supply-management legislation introduced by Sen. Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Rep. Richard Gephardt (D-MO) argue that their legislation would eliminate incentives for overproduction and encourage sustainable agriculture. Next year's farm legislation is certain to provide more flexibility and some encouragement to alternative agriculture. But many agribusinesses and big farmers are likely to fight such moves, and many conservatives will press for gradual dismantling of farm supports.

Yet most farmer advocates insist that some form of production management and price supports remains necessary, even if a shift to sustainable agriculture might eventually lower the necessary level of supports. "The free market does not respond to the need of the environment," argues Land Stewardship Project Director Ron Kroese. "Commodity prices now are just too low, especially for those putting in extra time and care and labor to do this kind of [environmentally sustainable] farming." □

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By Kathie Klarreich

PORT AU PRINCE, HAITI

Instability still reigns a year after Haitian coup

THAT HAITIAN PRESIDENT GENERAL PROSPER Avril is still in power one year after his coup is in itself quite a feat. He's lasted twice as long as his two predecessors. He has survived several coup attempts, a crippling economic decline and rampant "insecurity"—random and direct violence that is draining the country morally and materially.

Although it was the rank-and-file soldiers who placed Avril in office, his 30-year history with the Duvalier dynasty and his connections with the notorious Tonton Macoutes commanded a wait-and-see attitude. While even his most vocal critics acknowledge certain improvements, many promises have yet to be realized. The result is widespread discontent, increased repression and political instability.

"Everyone says we had a coup d'état last September," says Joseph Manici Pierre, secretary of one of Haiti's largest labor unions. "But we don't see it. Avril's political history and current trends all point to a continuation of a system that represents only a select few."

Yet from the beginning Avril has stated his interest in a transition to a civilian government. He is proud of the Permanent Electoral Council (CEP), which was formed in April to organize elections. After nearly 50 meetings with professional and political groups here in the capital, the nine council members recently finished a six-week tour of the nine major provinces.

Their survey consisted of five questions corresponding to the electoral process. The results will be presented to Avril, who is ultimately responsible for financing the elections, which will be held in two rounds in October and November 1990. If Avril wants to seek office, he will have to resign by Oct. 17, 1989, because under the Haitian Constitution no member of the military can run for office within a year of resigning his military post.

The government and electoral council members insist that the CEP is independent and intent on promoting free and fair elections. However, Duvalierist sympathizers and death-squad members were reported present at several of the CEP meetings, making it clear that in spite of a constitutional provision prohibiting anyone linked to the Duvalier regime to participate, they intend to run for office.

"The electoral council is just a puppet of the state," said Pierre. "They are taking their time in order to make more money and planting their roots in order to hold on to power. By continuing to create a climate of insecurity, free and fair elections are impossible."

The aid game: Transition to a democratic government was one requirement for the renewal of U.S. aid, which was suspended after an election-day massacre in November 1987. According to a statement by the deputy assistant secretary of state for the Caribbean, Richard Melton, "the U.S. fully supports the efforts of President Avril, the CEP and responsible political and social leaders to move forward on democratic, social and economic reforms." He also says the U.S. is encouraged by the steps taken thus far.

A longtime U.S. diplomat, however, acknowledged there are tremendous obstacles to holding free and fair elections, including the weakness and disorganization of political parties. But the parties seem aware of their

deficiencies, and several unlikely alliances have sprung up in hopes of consolidating what strength they have. There appears to be a move to run a few strong presidential candidates who represent a multitude of parties instead of running a multitude of candidates from weak political parties.

Reduction of drug trafficking is another condition for the resumption of U.S. aid. Encouraged by Haiti's cooperation—in particular by the recent seizure of a large amount of cocaine in the southern part of Haiti—the U.S. approved \$300,000 to be distributed over the next few months to expand the Haitian government's ability to track down drug dealers.

Little progress has been made, however, toward satisfying a third condition for U.S. aid resumption—improving Haiti's human-rights situation.

"The human-rights situation has only gotten worse," explains Moyse Senatus, director of the Haitian Lawyers Committee, an organization that offers free counseling to victims of human-rights abuses. "Insecurity is rising in the capital, and harassment by rural sheriffs is increasing. Most of the rural organizations that formed after Duvalier's flight have collapsed. They are unable to meet and organize due to repression. When members of popular organizations are arrested, they are defenseless. Unfortunately, the Haitian judicial system doesn't really exist if we can't prosecute the guilty."

Flagrant violations of detainees' rights are common. Many judges appointed under the Duvalier regime remain. To date there have

been no legitimate investigations or prosecutions of previous massacres, even though participants in those acts are widely known. In fact, the Avril government allowed one of the architects of a massacre that occurred a week before Avril took office to leave the country and seek asylum.

In mid-September Haiti's state-run newspaper, *L'Union*, reported the government pardoned or commuted sentences for 13 people, including former Duvalier secret police chief Luc Desir. Desir's sentence of life at hard labor was commuted to 30 years, a move some consider a gesture toward Duvalierists.

"The only difference between violations now vs. before Avril is that you don't find the mark of the National Palace on crimes," says Jean Jacques Honorat, director of CHADEL, one of Haiti's most prominent human-rights organizations. "But there are strong implications of their involvement—and their complacency makes them accomplices."

Bottom's down: Illegal arrests average one a day, according to CHADEL, and arbitrary detentions and assassinations occur about every two days. Over the last several months, crime in the capital city has increased. Nightly murders, robberies and rapes in Port au Prince force people inside when the sun goes down. In the isolated countryside, incidents of crime are harder to substantiate, yet the most common victims seem to be members of popular organizations struggling for democratic transition.

Some say the increase in banditry is a result of the desperate economic situation. Haiti's estimated 6 million people already suffer living in the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Of the estimated 77 percent who live in the rural areas, more than three-quarters of them are at or below the absolute poverty level. Employment is a meager 50 percent, with 90 percent earning less than \$150 annually. The commercial and business sector is dominated by some 4,000 merchant families of foreign origin, believed to have incomes in excess of \$90,000 a year.

Luc Espaca, director of promotion for Prominex, an agency created to increase foreign investment in Haiti, cites two reasons for the recent decline in the economy. First is the reduction of one of Haiti's major export earnings, coffee. Because the international market price of coffee is down and the quota set by the international accord is not enforced, Haiti has been unable to compete.

"On an industrial level," says Espaca, "the media has damaged Haiti's reputation. They have portrayed an image unfavorable for investing. Most large companies who are interested in opening up a factory here are waiting for a civilian government."

Contraband-aid: A shortage of U.S. dollars has created a panic in the country. The official exchange rate is five gourds to the dollar. But in the last year the unofficial exchange has jumped from 14 percent to 40 percent above the nominal rate and is expected to continue rising. As U.S. dollars become scarce, Avril has taken measures to control the black-market trade. He recently ordered sweeping arrests of moneychangers—who are as numerous as the fruit and vegetable merchants—but it has done little to stop the trade.

Avril has imposed several austerity measures to ease the financial strains. He has increased duty on a number of products, asked for the maintenance of current expenditure levels and has developed agricultural products to limit imports. Contraband, however, is a thriving business.

"We're stuck," complains one middle-class merchant. "Business is at best tenuous. If we don't buy contraband and change [money] at the unofficial rate, we'll collapse."

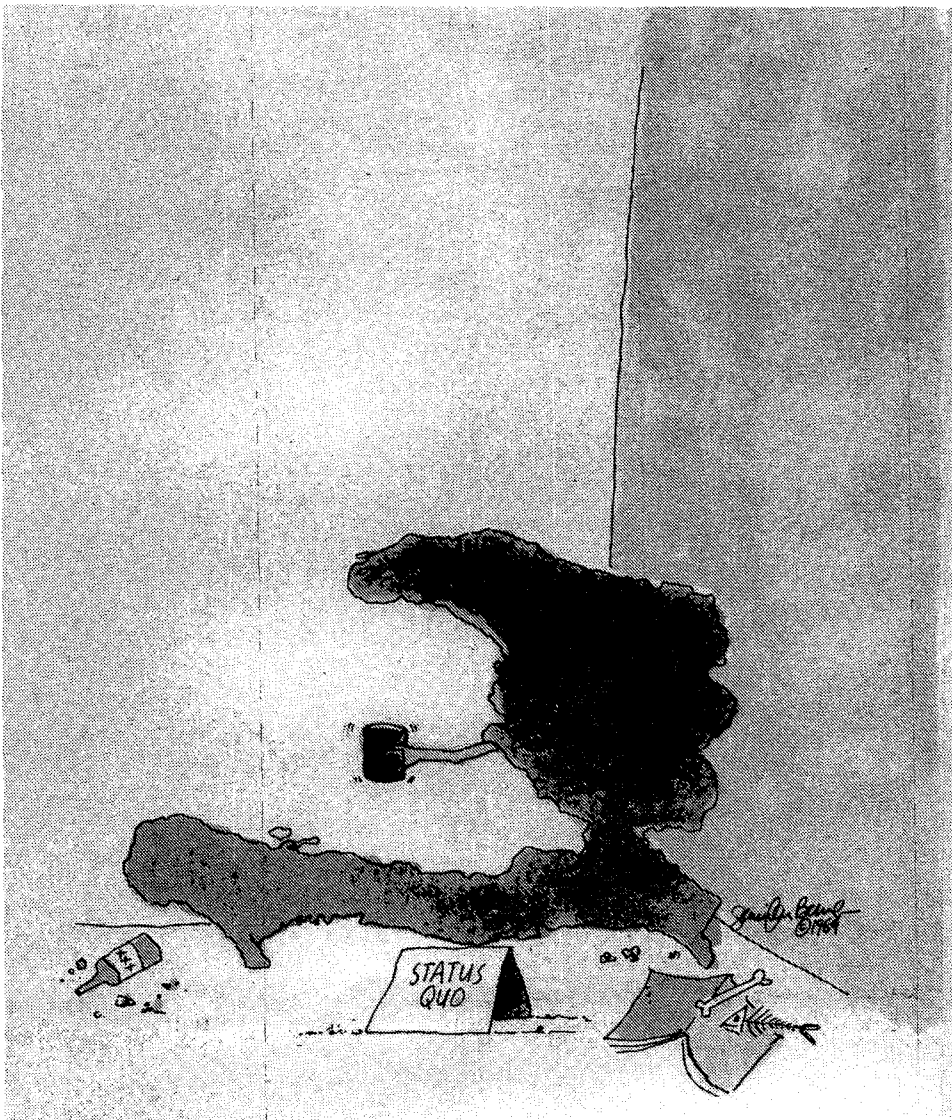
Whether it's a result of politics or economics, more Haitians than ever before are desperately fleeing the country by boat. As of June 1, 20,530 Haitians on some 300 boats were stopped by the U.S. Coast Guard. Of those, only five were permitted to pursue political asylum.

The government provides few if any social service programs. The successful literacy campaign sponsored by the Catholic Church was closed last year, just as it gained popularity at the grass-roots level. Although the Avril government recently announced a new literacy program, many see it as nothing more than a ruse to secure international aid.

"Illiteracy remains at 80 percent," says a teacher of the now-defunct Misyon Alpha. "Every government has had a literacy program. But if it starts to open people's eyes and expand their minds, the government steps in and stops it."

The same enthusiasm that was generated after Duvalier's departure reappeared when Avril took office. But history is repeating itself as it becomes apparent that in reality little has changed for the Haitian people. □

Kathie Klarreich covers Haiti for *In These Times*.



French and Italian communists shed ideology but not illusions

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY (PCF) LEADER Georges Marchais went to Moscow last Sept. 22 to give Mikhail Gorbachov a pat on the back in recognition of Gorbachov's conversion to Marchais' ideas. Or so it seemed from reports on the meeting in the PCF daily *L'Humanité*, which noted the Soviet party's necessary self-criticism for imposing a "single model" of Soviet-style socialism while the PCF basked in "the French colors" of its own model. Unlike the Soviets, the French communists evidently have no need for self-criticism.

As is frequently the case, Marchais seemed too smug to be real. The French party had been thought to be lagging behind in its enthusiasm for *glasnost* and *perestroika*. Marchais finally set people straight in his speech to the annual Fête de l'Humanité Sept. 10 before heading for Moscow. Belatedly endorsing criticisms of the USSR made over a decade ago by disillusioned intellectuals who have mostly since left the PCF, Marchais said that "we were worried, but we never despaired of socialist societies." In other words, Gorbachov has proved how right PCF leaders were all along.

Meeting photographers after five hours of talks at the Kremlin, Marchais said his party had experienced "difficult moments" with the Soviet party, adding happily that since Gorbachov came to power in 1985, "our relations are excellent, excellent."

Gorbachov agreed that all was well: "I wouldn't say our positions are identical, but they are very close."

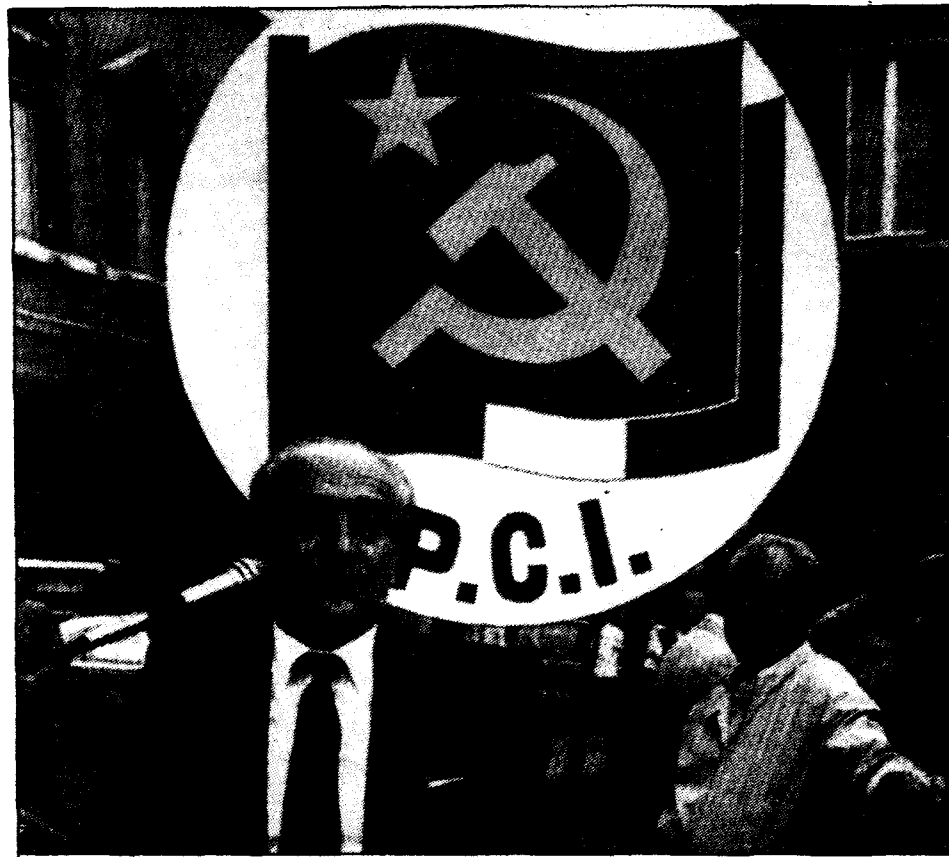
The official statements stressed agreement on "the role of the Communist Party" in the struggle for socialism. The current difficulties and conflicts in the Soviet Union could to some extent have been avoided if the party had been up to the challenge, they seemed to agree. Marchais stressed a new convergence on "the concept of socialism" which did not exist in "the previous period."

It was hard for outside observers to know what to make of this rejoicing at the end of a pre-Gorbachov split between the two parties that no one could remember. What outsiders remembered was Marchais rushing to Brezhnev's side to support the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

The belated but emphatic expression of total French Communist solidarity with Gorbachov's reform policy seemed designed to help the PCF at least as much as the beleaguered Soviet leader. Gorbachov is popular with the shrinking PCF electorate. It was politically urgent to make the point that *perestroika* is intended to rejuvenate, rather than jettison, socialism. Also, it helps Marchais to be able to point to the "unity of views" with Gorbachov on European problems.

Botch on the Rhine: Two problem areas are of special concern to the PCF: Germany, and the French Communists' rivalry with their neighbors in the Italian Communist Party (PCI), especially in regard to the European Community.

The PCF has traditionally had good relations with East German Communists. Strong support for the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and its ruling Socialist Unity Party



Alessandro Natta of the Italian Communist Party: stuck in the past.

(SED) accords with French dread of German reunification. The summer exodus of young East Germans through Hungary to West Germany has pushed even the PCF to creep toward veiled criticism of the GDR's leadership. Indeed, the stubborn refusal of Erich Honecker's SED to accept the slightest move toward political pluralism seems to be setting the stage for an explosion of major proportions and uncertain outcome. The worst possible scenario for both the French and Soviet parties (and for almost everybody else as well) would be an anti-socialist explosion in East Germany calling for reunification in a mood of enthusiastic reas-

The West's two main communist parties have become rivals for influence but not, unfortunately, for ideas.

sertion of German nationalism. To prevent this, giving some leeway to reformers still attached to socialism is necessary and urgent.

L'Humanité discreetly criticized SED leadership by quoting at length the GDR's vice minister of culture, Klaus Höpcke, who suggested that the causes of the exodus were to be found in East Germany itself and that people should be given more responsibility in their society. This contrasts with the official SED position blaming the West for luring people away.

For what it's worth, Marchais' emphatic endorsement of Gorbachov's course of reforms, coupled with *L'Humanité's* coverage of East Germany, can be seen as an additional discrete warning to East German Communists that they must change their act.

Another political concern of the French Communists in showing their closeness to Gorbachov is their ongoing rivalry with the

Italian Communists. This summer, the split between the PCF and PCI was formalized in the European Parliament. There is in the European Parliament no longer a group calling itself Communist, but now two groups, neither calling itself "communist." The seven French communists are in the "Left Coalition" with three Greeks, three Portuguese Communists and one representative of the Northern Ireland Workers Party. The 22 members elected on the PCI list are in the "Unitary European Left" group with four Spanish Communists, a Dane and a Greek. It was only through the efforts of Italian Socialist Party leader Bettino Craxi that the PCI was denied welcome to the Socialist group, where it is widely appreciated as the best of Italy's social democratic parties.

Moreover, the PCI is forming chapters in France for Italian migrant workers formerly organized inside the PCF, a move interpreted as setting up a direct competition with the French Communists on their home turf. At Soviet leader Chernenko's funeral in March 1985, his successor, Mikhail Gorbachov, took then-PCI secretary Alessandro Natta aside for more than an hour, praising Enrico Berlinguer, Natta's predecessor, for "useful and helpful" criticism of the Soviet Union. The Gorbachov generation has seemed much more appreciative of the PCI's successful independence than of the French Communists' apparent loyalty to Moscow, which has been of little use either to Moscow or to the French Communists.

Decline of the Roman Empiricists: However, the change of leadership in Moscow has coincided with a changed PCI leadership that has not built much of anything on this initial sympathy. Since taking over as secretary in June 1988, Achille Occhetto has turned his attention to the West and in particular to the U.S., where he hopes to lift Washington's longtime veto of PCI participation in the Italian national government. Occhetto is also looking for potential Socialist allies in the European Community.

Craxi and his Socialists have managed to

keep Occhetto's PCI on the defensive by harping on the past that the Communists are supposed to have to disavow before being accepted as democrats. Last year, the Socialists found a new if posthumous target in the person of Palmiro Togliatti, the PCI's "historic" postwar leader, who died at Yalta in 1964.

Returning to Italy in 1943 from fascist-era exile in Stalin's Moscow, Togliatti is credited with having built the postwar PCI as a mass rather than a vanguard party, contributing to the construction of democracy in Italy. Last February, Craxi lieutenant Claudio Martelli spoke of "Togliatti the accomplice and hangman." Whatever this was supposed to mean, it made Occhetto nervous. Unveiling a monument to Togliatti in Civitavecchia last July, Occhetto seemed to have come to bury, not to praise. Whatever Togliatti had done "belonged to the past, and it's up to us to

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do something new and different," said the new PCI leader. "It's clear to us that he was inevitably co-responsible for choices and acts of the Stalin era, that is, of a period in the history of the workers' movement that is full of shadows."

The trouble is that until they have actually succeeded in doing "something new and different," this readiness to condemn their forerunners sounds like nothing more than callow opportunism. So far all one can say of the Occhetto generation is that it seems too wishy-washy to accomplish what the older generation did, for better or for worse.

Finally, survivors of the older generation led by Togliatti's companion Nilde Iotti, president of Italy's National Assembly, came to Togliatti's defense. Retired labor leader Luciano Lama said that back when he was in the communist underground and then right after the liberation from fascism, he believed in things he sees very critically now. But he gave credit to Togliatti for saving Italy from the civil war that ravaged Greece. In 1945, said Lama, "there was the force, the determination and the arms in Italy for a communist revolution. Togliatti prevented all that, and today I think it can be considered a great good."

The late 20th century has a hard time finding anything more fascinating to think about than the dramatic errors of the mid-20th century. At the annual Festa dell'Unità summer gathering of the PCI more people were interested in arguments about Togliatti than in forward-looking discussions of ecological socialism.

The PCI's ranking ideologue, Pietro Ingrao, makes an effort to look backward, forward and at the present all at once. He has criticized a tendency to react to the changes in the East by a "separation" of them from us—"they" in the East who embodied "real socialism" that failed, while "we" are something else and innocent. Ingrao insists that the left's survival depends on coming to grips with what is happening in the East. The left has shifted from faith in a uniform socialism to faith in "the market." Ingrao suggests thinking not of "the market" but of "markets," recognizing that Russia will never be exactly like the West. Nor is it clear how long the West will be as we now think it is. In short, Ingrao called for more critical comparative analysis and less self-justification.

The shelves may be bare in Soviet stores, but the Russian marketplace of ideas is dazzling compared to the dreary display in the biggest of the West's Communist Parties. □

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AIM

Continued from page 6
camp for Dakota people. Organizers did not fail to remind their guests of that history.

But the celebration also illustrated the movement's own history. Dick Bancroft, a Twin Cities photographer who has closely observed AIM since its inception, said AIM's celebration of its birthday in a state park showed a shift from "confrontation to negotiation."

"Ten years ago we would have come here and taken over this park," Bancroft said. "Now, we are having a powwow here, and there's an agreement between the state of Minnesota and the American Indian Movement."

"I never would have thought we'd get to be this way," Bancroft added with a grin.

Since the mid-'70s, when AIM leadership was scattered by a wide-scale FBI counterin-

surgency operation, AIM members have gone many different ways. Some have become community organizers, developing schools and business centers. Others have jetted around the world to meet with Arab and African leaders and speak at the United Nations. Some have joined tribal governments.

Sometimes those different strategies clash, and people who stood shoulder to shoulder on the barricades in the early '70s now find themselves on opposite sides of the fence. When a group of AIM and other Indian leaders went to Libya in 1987, some Indian organizers criticized them for jeopardizing AIM's public support. AIM members who joined tribal governments have been accused of "selling out" by other activists. And in AIM groups from Minneapolis to San Francisco, members have fought passionately over issues ranging from tribal sovereignty to petty-cash accounts.

Internal dispute is particularly visible in AIM because the group is not an "organiza-

tion" in the mainstream sense. Its members do not carry cards or passes, no statutes have been written and no official hierarchy built. People in the movement say membership is "a state of mind."

That loose organization can make it difficult to keep the movement alive and cohesive. But AIM members say it's also the movement's strength. "AIM was never a mass organization," Bellecourt said. He points to the movement's roots in Indian spirituality and tradition. AIM is at its best, he said, when it serves as a catalyst, "the spark that kindles a fire long forgotten in the minds of the people."

To keep the fire alive is not easy, AIM members say, as the movement approaches the "age of maturity." During the gathering, while powwow guests circled the drums and listened to traditional songs, a few dozen "hard core" members spent their days in strategy meetings. They came out with a 20-point pro-

posal first prepared for the 1972 Trail of Broken Treaties. Among other things, the document calls on Congress to investigate and reaffirm Indian treaties and sovereignty.

But the challenges to AIM go beyond documents, several grass-roots organizers told the AIM leaders at the conference. "It's a war we're fighting," said Mike Chosa from the Lac du Flambeau, Wis., reservation. "And in a war, you need an army."

Chosa told the group of his tribe's struggle to defend resource-use rights against state interference. Although questions of who can take northern Wisconsin's fish, wildlife and timber are vital to tribal members, Chosa said, only a few dozen of the 2,400 people on his reservation attend meetings to address the issues. In urban areas, he said, Indian people are frequently not even aware of their tribal backgrounds and their rights.

"Maybe our issues are right," Chosa told the meeting. "But we ought to take a look at our methodology. We are not doing the things that attract support from the people."

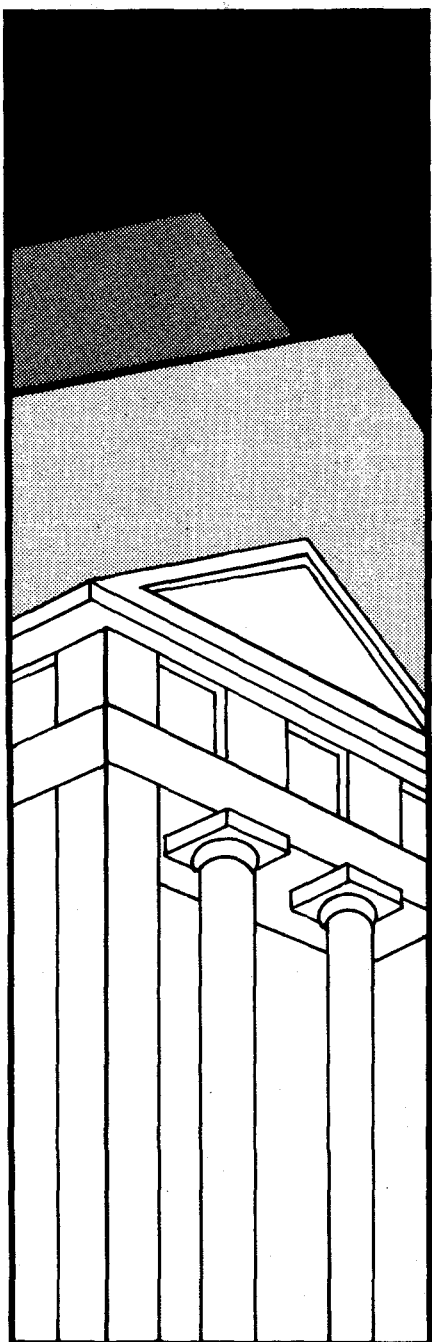
At the end of four days of strategy meetings, most of the AIM organizers tended to agree. But they were also ready to renew their calls for action. During a closing meeting, Leblanc sounded a theme that has consistently brought support for AIM from many different groups: the vision of a "spiritual rebirth." "We do not just speak for ourselves. We speak for the uranium. We speak for the trees. We speak for all humans, and beyond."

If AIM's goal is to translate that global responsibility into action, Leblanc said, the process has only just begun.

Monika Bauerlein is a German journalist based in Minneapolis.

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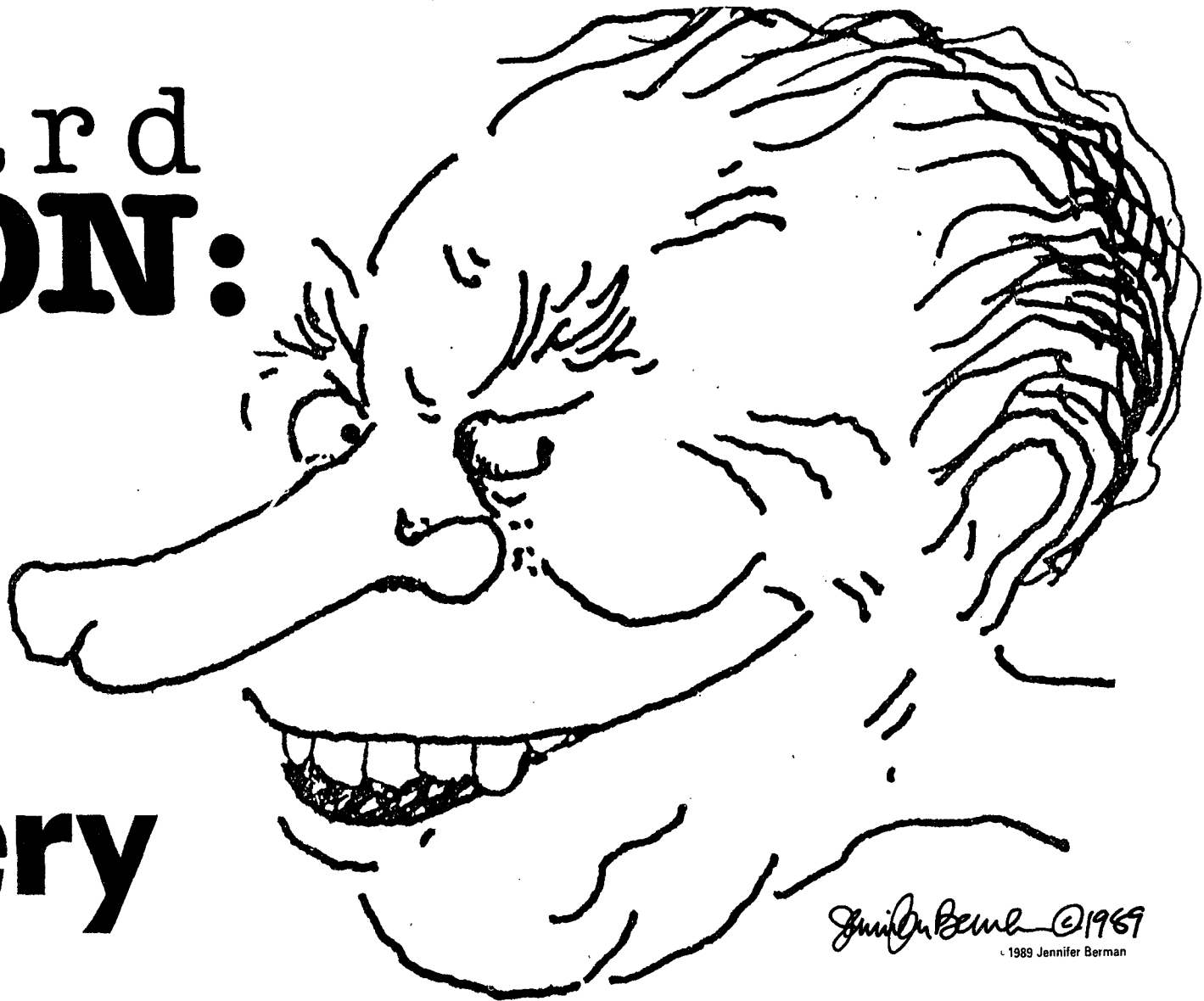
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Richard NIXON:

Up From Knavery



By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

IN THE AFTERMATH OF WATERGATE, RICHARD Nixon had few defenders. Historian Henry Steele Commager described him as "the first dangerous and wicked president." Sen. Barry Goldwater (R-AZ) called him "a basically dishonest person" who "came as close to destroying America as any man in that office has ever done."

But in the '80s Nixon has been rehabilitated, benefiting from an adoring reappraisal in *Newsweek* ("He's Back!" a May 1986 cover story declared), a standing ovation that year at the National Association of Newspaper Publishers, and a book, Robert Sam Anson's *Exile*, comparing him to Napoleon. Now, on the 15th anniversary of his resignation, no less than four major books about him and his administration are scheduled to appear.

There are, of course, perfectly good reasons for reassessing Nixon and his presidency. Watergate cast a long shadow over his entire career, obscuring Nixon's substantial strengths as a president and exaggerating his political depravity. Psychological profiles of Nixon, like David Abrahamson's *Nixon vs. Nixon* or even the more substantial study by Fawn Brodie, *Richard Nixon: the Shaping of his Character*, conveniently ignored his opening to China, his path-breaking arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union and his break with Republican laissez-faire orthodoxy.

But Nixon has benefited from other factors as well. In the '80s, just as he did in the 1968 election, Nixon succeeded in appearing to be all things to all people. Faced with Reagan's conception of the "evil empire," liberals began to look back nostalgically upon Nixon's strategy of detente with the Soviet Union, while conservatives saw in Nixon's foreign policy manifesto, 1999, and his opposition to the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty with the Soviet Union a hard-headed alternative to "Gorbymania."

In addition, time has faded memories of Watergate and the Vietnam War, the two momentous events of the Nixon presidency.

To his new admirers, Watergate is no longer seen as the outgrowth of a string of actions aimed at subverting the Constitution, but as just another political scandal. In an October 1988 *Commentary* article, "In Praise of Nixon," Paul Johnson called Watergate "a mess and nothing more."

Similarly, Nixon's admirers have reinterpreted his conduct of the war. Instead of seeing his escalation of the air war and spread of the ground war into Cambodia and Laos as part of a savage detour aimed at the impossible goal of victory, the Nixon revisionists portray him as gradually moving toward the peace treaty of January 1973. In their new book, *The Acting President*, CBS correspondent Bob Schieffer and journalist Gary Paul Gates write that Nixon's "policy of gradual withdrawal from Vietnam inflamed antiwar critics who wanted an immediate pullout."

Even Nixon biographer Stephen Ambrose succumbs to confusion when describing Nixon's conduct of the war. In the just-published and generally useful second volume of his biography, *Nixon: The Triumph of a Politician, 1962-1972*, Ambrose offers contradictory assessments. On the one hand, he argues convincingly that Nixon could and should have gotten the U.S. out of the war in the first two years of his term but persisted because of domestic political priorities and the vain hope of victory. "The only solution was to end the war," Ambrose writes, "but Nixon remained determined to avoid being the first president to lose a war and to insist that his policies would bring peace with honor."

Elsewhere, however, Ambrose calls Nixon's "de-escalation of the war... one of his historic achievements. Quite possibly no one else could have pulled it off." Identifying with the president's own vision of political apocalypse, Ambrose maintains that Nixon had no choice but to prolong the war for another four years.

The challenge in reassessing Nixon is to avoid swinging from one extreme interpretation to another: from Nixon as devil to Nixon

as saint, from Watergate as unmitigated evil to Watergate as unfortunate mess, from Vietnam as imperial genocide to Vietnam as a noble, if misguided, crusade. Nixon changed the structure of world politics and probably did more than anyone except Mikhail Gorbachov to end the Cold War, yet he also savagely and needlessly prolonged the war in Vietnam. He understood party politics better than any politician in America, but he promoted a tawdry politics based upon fear, hatred and deceit.

The question posed by Nixon's political life is how the same man could be both savant and swine. The answer, if it exists at all,

Richard, the second son, was a peculiar blend of father and mother. He absorbed his father's interest in politics and his capacity for rage and resentment, but like his mother, he was fastidious to a fault, extremely reserved about his feelings, and dour and humorless (school classmates nicknamed him "gloomy Gus"). He had no close friends outside his family and appeared to be a somewhat unhappy child, pained, as he later admitted, by "laughs and slights and snubs."

Several things may have contributed to this feeling of being slighted. His parents favored his older brother Frank and his younger brother Arthur over him. And Nixon

If the biographer's challenge is to discover how Nixon could be both swine and savant, the nation's challenge is to reclaim his realism while repudiating his politics.

is buried in his southern California childhood, where Nixon acquired his distinct combination of repressed rage and objective intelligence. There is a strong link between these personal qualities and the way that Nixon later conducted himself in political office.

Gloomy Gus: The details of his childhood can be gleaned from Ambrose's first volume, *Nixon: the Education of a Politician, 1913-1962*, and from Brodie's generally perceptive study. Nixon grew up in Whittier, a small town in southern California, where his father owned a grocery store. Frank Nixon was a large, sloppy, boisterous, argumentative man with an explosive temper that struck fear in his children. A converted Republican, he loved to argue about politics, and many of the store's patrons, eager to avoid Frank's polemics, requested the service of Frank's wife Hannah. She was quiet, intense and exceptionally reserved. A devout Quaker, Hannah forbade her children to smoke and drink and disapproved of their dancing.

also may have identified with his father: he displayed the typical envy and resentment of a struggling small businessman who periodically had to be bailed out by his wealthier in-laws.

But Richard rarely voiced his resentment, choosing to keep his anger dammed in. When he was age 10, however, he astonished his younger brother Donald when he "cut loose" and railed at him for three-quarters of an hour about everything he had done wrong for the prior two years. It was as if Richard had stored each incident away. Fifty years later, he would on occasion act the same way: according to his aide, H.R. Haldeman, Nixon would suddenly "really blow."

But there was another side to Nixon's repressed rage. As a child he learned to use words at times when others would express their emotions physically. In school he enjoyed reciting poems. At Whittier College he became an accomplished actor and debater. Nixon also acquired an uncanny ability—

Continued on following page



later applied to politics and international relations—to sort out and master highly charged and complex situations.

This stranger in a strange land came to know others' fears and expectations but kept his own to himself. He could not look other people in the eye; he watched them when they were not watching him.

He first demonstrated these skills at home and at school. Unlike his brothers, Nixon appeared able to evade his father's fiery temper. In high school and at college, he became a successful student leader despite having no close friends. Later he would become a political anomaly: an extremely successful politician who intensely disliked shaking voters' hands and slapping their backs.

Cynical detachment: Nixon was always interested in going into politics. After graduating from Duke University Law School, he returned to Whittier rather than joining a New York law firm. Then after a tour in the Navy in World War II, he ran for Congress in 1946 at the urging of a group of local businessmen and bankers.

This first campaign against liberal Democratic incumbent Jerry Voorhis revealed the first of many "new Nixons." Nixon astonished Whittier's Quaker community by running an extraordinarily dirty campaign, attempting to portray his pro-New Deal, anti-communist challenger as a communist. He lied brazenly about his opponent's record, erroneously charging that Voorhis had been endorsed by the communist-dominated southern California Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). When challenged in a debate to prove this charge, Nixon held up a piece of paper that he claimed verified the CIO endorsement, but it was actually a position paper from a different political action committee.

During the campaign, Nixon showed both a deep understanding of politics and a cynical amorality that went considerably beyond those of the average politician of his time. He discovered McCarthyism well before the reactionary senator from Wisconsin but practiced it with a cool reserve that McCarthy could never emulate.

What made Nixon feel morally justified in lying? In her psychohistory, Brodie suggests that Nixon was subtly influenced by his mother, who while proclaiming the virtues

of honesty embroidered her own difficult life with pleasant myths. Ambrose suggests that Nixon simply applied business principles to politics. In addition, he could always justify his own lying by projecting his fears and resentments onto his political opponents: they became not merely rival politicians, but sinister communists and, later, establishment elitists.

As a congressman from 1946 to 1950 and then as the junior senator from California, he showed a remarkable ability to pursue a politics that played on fear and deceit, while entertaining clear and prescient views of the world situation. Nixon endeared himself to the Republican "old guard"—the isolationist, militantly anti-New Deal and anti-communist midwestern Republicans—by his leadership in the Alger Hiss case and by his absurd but effective charges that "communists infiltrated the highest councils" of the Truman administration.

Yet in the arena of international relations Nixon aligned himself with the party's more enlightened wing of Eastern internationalists, led by Thomas Dewey, the *New York Herald Tribune's* John Hay Whitney and the Dulles brothers. Against the wishes of his own constituency in southern California, he joined the internationalists in backing the Democratic-sponsored Marshall Plan and NATO.

Nixon allied himself with the internationalists partly because he knew where the real power in the national Republican Party lay. He even made a point of securing Dewey and John Foster Dulles' approval before proceeding with the Hiss case—something that McCarthy would never have dreamed of doing. As early as the late '40s Nixon had displayed a remarkable understanding of international relations. He realized that Republican isolationism was irrelevant to the post-war economic order.

After returning from a visit to Europe in 1948, he explained to a reporter that "there are still too many people who think that the way to solve our international difficulties is to isolate ourselves from the rest of the world and become completely self-sufficient." Nixon understood that the U.S. depended on world trade. "If we place proper emphasis upon importing from those countries to which we export, our own wealth will be

increased rather than depleted in the end."

His combination of old guard anti-communism and establishment internationalism put him in a unique position in the Republican Party. He became the link between its two wings and the obvious vice-presidential choice for the presidential candidate of the internationalist wing, Dwight Eisenhower. Nixon further ingratiated himself by bringing the California delegation into Eisenhower's corner during the 1952 convention—a move that was crucial to Eisenhower's victory over the old guard's candidate, Ohio Sen. Robert Taft.

"Give me a week": Nixon did not have an easy time as Eisenhower's vice president. He was distrusted by the president, who thought he was "immature," and by many of Eisenhower's establishment backers, who viewed him, in spite of his internationalism, as a representative of the old guard. In 1952 Eisenhower, prodded by his New York supporters, almost dropped Nixon from the ticket

after reporters discovered that he had persuaded his California supporters to contribute to a political slush fund.

In 1956 Eisenhower refused to commit himself to running again with Nixon on the ticket until the August convention. Then in 1960, even though Nixon had no formal opposition, Eisenhower waited until that summer to endorse him for president. In Eisenhower's statements, he seemed determined to sabotage Nixon's candidacy. When a reporter kept asking him to name an idea of Nixon's that he had adopted as president, he replied petulantly, "If you give me a week, I might think of one." Nixon refused to express any resentment against Eisenhower, whom he idolized, but during these years he probably acquired his animosity toward the Eastern establishment.

Eisenhower also kept Vice President Nixon under wraps for two terms, using him to wage partisan attacks on the Democrats—Eisenhower's Democratic opponent Adlai Stevenson called Nixon a "white-collar McCarthy"—but rebuking him when the attacks threatened the bipartisan foreign policy coalition. In 1960 Eisenhower exerted subtle pressure on Nixon's presidential campaign, curbing Nixon's impulses to repudiate Eisenhower's moderation on military spending and to flail at the Democrats for being soft on communism.

In that campaign, Nixon made two serious political mistakes. First, he chose former Massachusetts senator and upper-class WASP Henry Cabot Lodge as his vice president, believing that to win he had to balance his own old-guard candidacy with that of an Eastern liberal. The choice of Lodge arguably lost Nixon the election.

Second, Nixon uncharacteristically ran a clean and straightforward campaign, choosing not to exploit racial or religious tensions or rumors about John Kennedy's womanizing. Nixon would not make the mistake again.

The new majority: His successful 1968 and 1972 presidential campaigns laid the

groundwork for a new Republican majority. These campaigns were as politically innovative as Franklin Roosevelt's in 1932 and 1936, but their significance was initially obscured by Watergate and by Democratic victories in 1974 and 1976. Nixon moved the heart of Republicanism from the East to the West

Richard Nixon couldn't look other people in the eye; he watched them when they were not watching him.

and the South; he drove blacks out of the party, opening its door to white ethnics. He created what later came to be known as the "Reagan majority."

Nixon sensed the possibilities of a new coalition as early as 1954, but it was only after 1960 that he shifted toward a new political approach. That shift was most evident in his pronouncements on race and civil rights. In the '50s, the Republicans were still the party of Lincoln, identified more closely than the Democrats with black civil rights. Nixon himself believed that Republicans could make up for their losses in the South by attracting the votes of northern blacks.

In 1956 Nixon attacked Stevenson for not supporting the Supreme Court's school desegregation decision and boasted about his



own membership in the NAACP. The next year, as Eisenhower was trying to get the Democratic Congress to pass a civil rights bill, Nixon welcomed Martin Luther King Jr. to the White House. But this did not work to his advantage in the 1960 election. Kennedy won 80 percent of the black vote largely because he and Robert Kennedy came to King's aid when King was jailed in Georgia.

By 1962, however, when Nixon ran in the Republican California gubernatorial primary against a right-wing opponent, he claimed that he had been only an honorary member of the NAACP. And in 1968 and 1972 Nixon used the code words of racial conflict to curry favor with anti-civil rights southerners. He decried the breakdown of law and order in northern cities, he demanded that the Supreme Court "interpret the law and not make the law,"—a canard that Nixon rather than Ed Meese originated—and he proclaimed his support for "states' rights." By 1972 Nixon had thoroughly alienated blacks, but had successfully won over the white southerners and northern ethnics who had voted for George Wallace for president in 1968.

Nixon was also responsible for adding other key ingredients to the "Reagan majority." Nixon, not Reagan, was the first conservative politician to make an issue of high property taxes. He railed against pornog-

1960, Nixon uncharacteristically ran a clean and straightforward campaign, choosing not to exploit racial or religious tensions or rumors about John Kennedy's womanizing. Nixon would not make the mistake again.

raphy well before the Rev. Jerry Falwell began his Moral Majority, and he made an issue of Democrats' patriotism well before George Bush discovered the Pledge of Allegiance. Indeed, Bush's 1988 campaign was virtually a rerun of Nixon's 1972 campaign against Sen. George McGovern.

Nixon's new politics were best summed up by his choice in 1968 of Spiro Agnew for vice president. Agnew was a southerner rather than an easterner, he was a white ethnic rather than a Boston blueblood, and

he had made his national reputation by telling off a group of Maryland's black leaders. Agnew, primed by speechwriter Pat Buchanan, became the public outlet for Nixon's darker political impulses.

Peace with honor: In the 1968 election, Nixon used the Vietnam War to political advantage. While he never claimed explicitly that he had a "secret plan" to end the war—that phrase originated in a wire-service headline—he let disillusioned anti-war

backed Thieu regime as sovereign in South Vietnam. In effect, he called on the North Vietnamese and their Viet Cong allies to abandon their basic war aims, and, not surprisingly, they refused.

Nixon's strategy in Vietnam was modeled after Eisenhower's in Korea. When peace talks stalled, Eisenhower used the threat of nuclear weapons to prod the North Koreans and Chinese into agreeing to a partitioned Korea. But the U.S. and South Koreans were in a far stronger position in Korea than the U.S. and South Vietnamese were in Vietnam.

Nixon spent four years trying unsuccessfully to prove that Vietnam was analogous to Korea. To force the North Vietnamese to accede, he spread the war into Cambodia and Laos and unleashed unprecedented air assaults against North Vietnam. For instance, between May 9 and October 3, 1972, while Nixon was basking in the glow of the SALT treaty with the Soviet Union, U.S. planes made 41,500 attack sorties.

The North Vietnamese finally accepted the American terms only after the U.S.—on October 8, 1972—agreed to the presence of North Vietnamese troops in the South and to a committee of national reconciliation that included the Communists. (Even then, Nixon, worried that a peace treaty would benefit the Democrats in November by making domestic rather than foreign policy the focus of the campaign, needlessly prolonged the war, agreeing to a settlement in January only after a murderous Christmas bombing of North Vietnam.)

The president reacted to the continuing opposition to the war, whether in the press

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EDITORIAL

IN THESE TIMES

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In These Times believes that to guarantee our life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, Americans must take greater control over our nation's basic economic and foreign policy decisions. We believe in a socialism that fulfills rather than subverts the promise of American democracy, where social needs and rationality, not corporate profit and greed, are the operative principles. Our pages are open to a wide range of views, socialist and non-socialist, liberal and conservative. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

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1979: Chinese troops invade Vietnam. Later that year, Vietnam ousted the Chinese-backed Pol Pot regime in Cambodia.

As Vietnam withdraws from Cambodia, the U.S. should follow suit

Vietnam has been subject to foreign domination and exploitation for most of its history. The Chinese ruled it for a thousand years, the French held it for 80 and the Japanese occupied it during World War II. After the war, when the Japanese were driven out, France attempted to re-establish its domination in a war against the Communist-led Viet Minh. They were supported in this effort by the United States, which from 1950 until 1954 paid 80 percent of the cost of the war—some \$2.6 billion. As Sen. Mike Mansfield (D-MT) reported in the latter year, "As a result of American assistance," the French forces "possessed great superiority—estimated as high as 10-1—in armaments, and the flow of American aid was constant and increasingly heavy."

Even so, the French suffered a humiliating and final defeat at the battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954, which led to a peace conference in Geneva. The Geneva accords did three things: they ended the war, they "temporarily" divided Vietnam and they set up a plan to "ensure" the peace and reunification of the country. That was 35 years ago, but the war began again because the United States chose not to permit the nationwide elections called for in the Geneva accords and the unification of the country under Communist control that would have followed. Instead, starting with the Eisenhower administration and escalating under John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, the United States first encouraged and aided the South Vietnamese regime of Ngo Dinh Diem to fight the North, and when that proved unsuccessful took on the war as its own.

As part of the war effort, the United States also intervened in Cambodia, installing the Lon Nol regime and secretly bombing the country in an attempt to prevent its use as a sanctuary and supply route for the Viet Cong. But Lon Nol, seen as the American puppet he was, was extremely unpopular and in 1975 was overthrown by Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge, at the time an ally of the North Vietnamese. The rest, as they say, is history. Pol Pot's regime made Stalin look like Snow White. Under the Khmer Rouge's rule, Cambodian society was all but

destroyed as more than a million people were systematically murdered or worked to death in an orgy of anti-Western fanaticism.

In 1979, after four years of Khmer Rouge terror, the Cambodians were rescued by Vietnam, which invaded the country to rid it of Pol Pot. In Cambodia the Vietnamese were seen as a godsend, but the Chinese, who themselves invaded Vietnam in 1979, viewed them simply as surrogates for the Soviet Union and supported Pol Pot. So did the United States, which has insisted that the current government of Cambodia, now led by Hun Sen, is simply a puppet regime of Vietnam. In the United Nations, as a result of American and Chinese insistence, the Pol Pot regime is still recognized as the legitimate government of Cambodia. And on the Cambodian border in Thailand, the Khmer Rouge is still armed and encouraged in its efforts to return to power by the U.S. and China.

All of this, of course, is something of a political embarrassment. It's one thing to arm and encourage murderous regimes quietly, but another to be exposed to the glaring light of worldwide publicity. So American support of the Khmer Rouge is now masked as support of Prince Norodom Sihanouk, Cambodia's hereditary ruler who was overthrown by U.S.-supported Lon Nol for being soft on the Viet Cong, but who has since been adopted by the Chinese and refurbished in the West. Sihanouk is the nominal leader of a coalition of three groups, but only the Khmer Rouge has any military strength. Nevertheless, the State Department argues that its inclusion in Sihanouk's coalition "holds out some prospect" that the struggle with the Khmer Rouge "can be contained within a political process."

For their part, the Vietnamese, partly out of exhaustion brought on by having to continue fighting years after their war of independence was won, have now withdrawn their forces from Cambodia. As a well-known Vietnamese writer said last week, "We have borne a great sacrifice [in ridding Cambodia of Pol Pot], and we can bear no more." The Cambodians, he said, "will just have to do the best they can." In Vietnam the pullout is seen as a chance, at long last, "to build our own society in an easier atmosphere."

And, indeed, Vietnam and Cambodia have both suffered long enough. It is time for the United States—the primary nation responsible for the misery and terror that both peoples have endured—to leave them in peace. That can be done only by stopping all aid to the Sihanouk coalition and by recognizing the Hun Sen government, de facto if not officially. In short, the time has come, as part of the ending of the Cold War, to end our war against the people of Indochina.

AS THE FIRST CHAIR OF THE BERKELEY CITY COMMISSION on Peace and Justice, established to administer the Nuclear Free Zone ordinance passed by the people of this city, I have learned a great deal about what cities actually can, and actually cannot, do on the international stage, discussed by Paul Rauber in "U.S. cities starting to act on the international stage" (*JTT*, Sept. 6).

From these perspectives, I would like to add a few words to the otherwise helpful summary of the work of many citizens and cities, and of the Center for Innovative Diplomacy. The words are these:

Almost everything a city can actually undertake to encourage peace in the world can be properly placed under this power over health and welfare without conflicting the clear, constitutional power of the federal government over foreign policy.

As we have learned not to say "he" when we mean "he and or she," and as we have learned to move beyond the words "colored" or "black" or "Oriental" or "Indian" as these words have been found inapposite by the people they name, so I think it is useful in a country as litigious as this one and as Constitution-conscious, to avoid the language trap of calling something "municipal foreign policy" when in fact it is "municipal domestic policy in the nuclear age."

A rose by this name is constitutional.

Enduring vision

THANK YOU FOR THE EDITORIAL PIECE "COMMUNISM's crisis, socialism's opportunity" (*JTT*, Aug. 30). Finally someone in the left media has stated what to me has seemed clearly obvious ever since we heard about this so-called "death of socialism." Socialists, rather than moping about with pessimistic countenances over the gloating of the capitalist media, should be celebrating fully our new possibilities to redefine and resurrect our much-maligned (by both state and non-state capitalist societies) move-

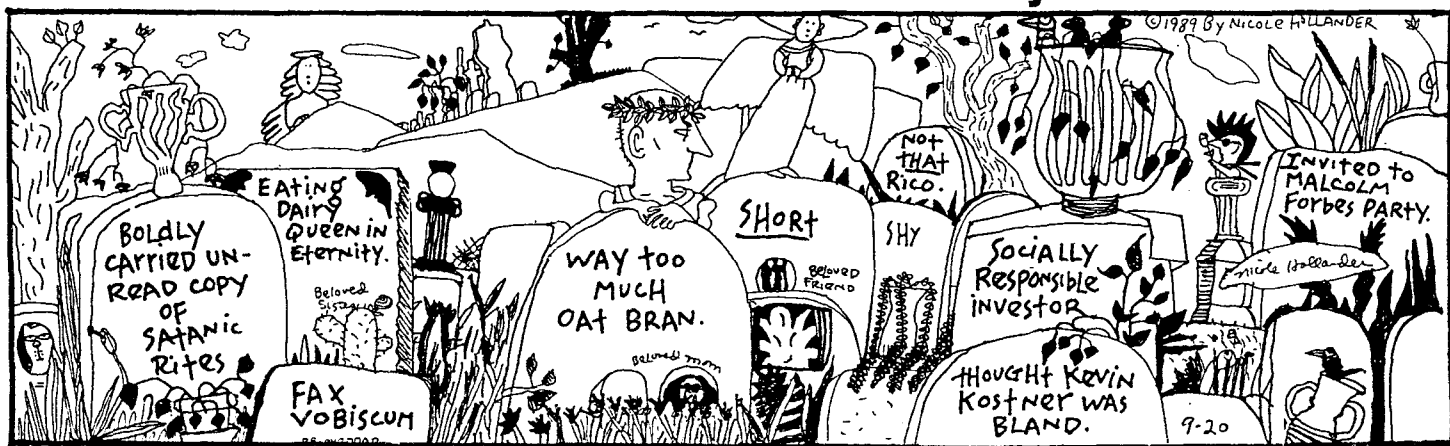
As the dust clears from the reshuffling of Eastern Europe and the ongoing struggle in China, the favorite whipping boy of capitalist propaganda will eventually tumble. However, what it will leave in its wake will be not a world capitalist hegemony but the most encouraging thing of all—the enduring vision of democratic socialism. And in the next decade, as capitalism's ostensible prosperity begins to swing the other way, it is that vision that we must ignite and hold fast to, with an optimism that will become more and more justifiable at every point of reckoning.

Andrew Hammon

Finally, Salamon the seer informs us that Browne "doesn't imagine that an affluent white man can have anything worthwhile to say." How the hell does Salamon know what Browne imagines? The theme of Salamon's article seems to be: "If only Jackson Browne (and other males) were just like me." Thank God or Darwin we're not. Salamon should explore Browne's growth as a

The Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 was passed supposedly to make unions more democratic. But it was famous for outlawing the closed shop, a contractual provision whereby the company, during negotiations with its employees, would agree to hire union members exclusively. Taft-Hartley left a loophole whereby workers could negotiate a provision so the employer could require employees to join the union within 30 days as a condition of employment. This was

SYLVIA



by Nicole Hollander

By Joanne Landy

THE ASTOUNDING RISE OF DEMOCRATIC movements in the Eastern bloc and the easing of East-West tensions could bring an end to the Cold War in Europe. Successful democratization in Poland is key to realizing this promise, yet the U.S. administration's response to Solidarity's call for help has been a remarkably modest \$169 million. Fortunately, many members of Congress are calling for greater generosity.

The administration's claim that this country can't afford more just doesn't stand up. The U.S. spends an estimated \$150 billion per year on the military defense of Western Europe. Even a fraction of that would do wonders to improve the desperate conditions in Poland, and would thereby help secure a democratic and lasting peace in Europe.

Congress should press for more money for Solidarity, but it should also review the conditions attached to U.S. support. Bush has made aid depend on the fulfillment of two requirements: (1) continuing political liberalization and (2) implementing "economic reform."

There should be no disagreement about the first condition: the defense of human rights ought to be a cardinal principle of U.S. policy. Sadly, this principle has all too often been honored only in the breach—South Korea, Turkey, El Salvador, Romania, the Philippines and China come to mind. But the economic precondition needs serious public discussion.

The U.S., the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have insist-

U.S. austerity demand imperils East Europe's democratization

ed that Third World countries adopt economic programs imposing severe austerity on most of the population. This usually means elimination or deep cuts in subsidies of food and other necessities and privatization of major enterprises, with higher prices for health care, education and transport. The Bush policy extends these requirements from the Third World to Eastern Europe.

Yet many Poles and Hungarians fear such "reform" will create social explosions. When I was in Poland in June, Solidarity members told me food riots like those in Venezuela and Argentina were likely if similar austerity were imposed. Though less alarmed about the immediate future, reformers in Budapest told me that they were worried that Hungarian democracy would be jeopardized by a sharp fall in popular living standards. They feared people would equate democratization with pauperization and lose interest in democracy.

Until now East European opposition movements haven't had a clear economic program—understandably, since they saw no immediate chance of political power. But recent tumultuous events have catapulted Solidarity into responsibility, prompting discussion of economic policy in democratic movements throughout the

bloc. Today the official position of Solidarity can be called "an IMF program with a human face." Solidarity has asked for substantial Western support, while planning a "capitalist shock" to reorganize the economy. A small but significant minority of leading Solidarity leaders have opposed this "shock" approach, warning that it will prove neither fair nor viable.

The government will probably encounter resistance from workers, pensioners and other low-income people who have historically been Solidarity's base. Unless there is effective protection against skyrocketing prices, food shortages, unemployment and the deterioration of housing, health care and ecological standards, the Polish people may well demand a basic redirection of the reforms. Such a demand is especially likely if the government's program creates a new privately wealthy stratum while living conditions of ordinary Poles sharply decline.

When Solidarity was born, it was the voice of the victims of the Communist system, calling for the right to strike, pay raises indexed to inflation, improved health care, three-year paid maternity leave, day care and better housing. One can argue that such demands are unrealistic today due to Poland's catastrophic economic crisis, and under certain cir-

cumstances Solidarity's ranks may agree. But Solidarity's legacy means the government may be challenged from below to adopt alternative, more socially equitable programs to resolve the crisis than the one apparently envisioned by advocates of economic shock therapy. Alternatives could include progressive taxation, radically reducing or eliminating *nomenklatura* jobs, workers' self-management, various forms of social ownership of large enterprises and democratic planning, restrictions on privatization and the slashing of military and secret-police budgets, which would pay for critical social needs. Unfortunately, while many in Congress are challenging the administration for its lack of generosity to Solidarity, the Simon bill granting Poland more funds limits aid to an investment fund called the "United States-Poland endowment for free enterprise," thus precluding its use for alternative programs.

The real issue for Americans is not to speculate about which roads Poles will choose, but whether to condition aid to Poland and other democratizing East European countries on implementing wage cuts, higher prices for food and social services, major unemployment and the creation of a new private elite. For the West to impose "reforms" that cause widespread social suffering can endanger democratic initiatives that could help end the division of Europe just when these initiatives show the greatest promise of success.

Joanne Landy is director of the Campaign for Peace and Democracy in New York. She is a frequent visitor to Eastern Europe.

Continued from page 15

called a "union-shop clause," and it replaced the "closed shop," except in some "right-to-work states."

The Taft-Hartley Act had the infamous Section 14(b)—the provision for right-to-work states. Federal law already provided for the National Labor Relations Board to conduct elections so that a union may only represent employees at a firm where the majority wish to be represented. The so-called right-to-work laws prevent the employees from negotiating an agreement with their employer that would require all employees to join their union in their company within 30 days as a condition of employment.

In right-to-work states, once a union has been organized, the management gradually

replaces the union workers with non-union employees, discreetly letting the new employees know they won't go far in the company if they join the union. Soon union members are in the minority, or are at least weakened so that they can no longer win a strike. About half the states now have right-to-work laws.

The American Civil Liberties Union is generally a pretty good organization, and, indeed, I am a member. But I think their position favoring right-to-work laws comes from their executive board not knowing how these laws are used to keep workers living in right-to-work states from earning more than about half what a similar worker can earn in a non-right-to-work state.

Landrum-Griffin, enacted in 1959 and men-

tioned in your article, also had some union democracy provisions that were used as a smokescreen to get it passed. But the intent of the bill was to weaken the workers' ability to win strikes with language like that which outlawed the secondary boycott, thus prohibiting workers in a non-striking company from walking out to protest their company selling or using products from a "struck company"—that is, another company whose employees were on strike and were continuing to operate with strikebreakers. It also outlawed the "hot cargo" provisions in union contracts. A hot-cargo clause would be negotiated so that workers would not have to haul freight from a struck company. Landrum-Griffin may have made unions more democratic, but because of Landrum-Griffin it became unlawful for union workers to help other union workers who were in trouble.

When striking employees cannot generate enough economic pressure on their employers to force employers to come to some kind of terms with them, they lose their jobs—usually after having spent months on the picket line with no paycheck. And when there are few unionized firms in the area to absorb them, they find it very difficult to find another job in the industry within which they have been working, or anywhere for that matter.

I loved my work as a union organizer more than 25 years ago. What I didn't like was signing workers up in the union, winning a National Labor Relations Board representation election, then not being able to get the workers a contract—even a very weak one. In desperation the people would go out on strike, where they were replaced in a matter of just a few days.

Jesse Jackson mentioned this problem in his speech to the Democratic National Convention. But no other politician of national standing has taken notice of the plight of the American working poor. Japanese and German firms have opened plants in the U.S. to take advantage of our "cheap American labor." And our productivity is falling nationwide.

So the real problem is not union democracy. The problem is that, except in a few highly organized areas or industries, most American workers do not have the economic strength to win a strike! When the promoters of previous legislation talked of union democracy, they really meant democracy so that the employers would no longer have to deal with their employees' representatives.

Workers who would like to have a union contract cannot get one because of laws that are supposed to get them union democracy. And the percentage of American workers who are union members is dropping almost every day!

I get concerned when I hear of organizations worrying about workers' "right to work" and "union democracy." It would be interesting to know where such groups get their funding.

Bill Fulcher
Brownsville, Texas

David Moberg replies: Strengthening union democracy strengthens unions. Just because some laws with good provisions for internal democracy had many bad provisions weakening union power is no reason to make democracy guilty of anti-unionism by association. By the way, I am ready to join any association for congressional democracy as well.

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By Harry Brill

The Supreme Court is wrong for being so right

THE SUPREME COURT HAS BEEN ON A long holiday, which has been a welcome relief. Some of us, in fact, think it would be nice if the court would extend its vacation a little longer. For if the conservative majority continues its stampede on human rights, they may eventually leave very little legal recourse for many individuals except to sit around in circles to community-sing and shred American flags. On civil rights issues, the court this last term has been responsible for several horrendous decisions that impact on minorities and women where it pains the most—earning a living and being able to advance on the job. Although labeling these rulings as conservative is certainly accurate, to leave it at that, as the mass media has done, would be a serious mistake. This just reinforces the widespread impression that the Supreme Court's mission is broad enough to define any of its decisions as legitimate no matter how harmful they are.

However, the truth is that many recent court opinions have been not only conservative but also dead wrong. When the court assesses whether injured parties are protected by some particular legislation, it is incumbent upon the justices to apply the law as it was intended by lawmakers. Otherwise, this non-elected branch of the federal government would be putting itself, inappropriately, in the business of legislating rather than interpreting laws. Yet this is exactly what the conservative majority has done.

Civil rights: Consider the court's very narrow interpretation of the civil rights law enacted right after the Civil War, Section 1981 (which refers to how the law is currently codified). The court dismissed a claim by a black woman who sued her employer because she had been persistently harassed on her job. Brenda Patterson was employed by a credit union as a teller, but unlike other tellers, she was as-

signed various demeaning tasks. She was denied routine salary increases, and she was frequently the object of racial slurs. Patterson brought a lawsuit under Section 1981, which gave blacks for the first time the right to make and enforce contracts. This means the right to negotiate with employers over wages, hours and working conditions and to have access to the courts if an agreement is violated.

The court is not applying laws as intended by those who wrote them.

signed various demeaning tasks. She was denied routine salary increases, and she was frequently the object of racial slurs. Patterson brought a lawsuit under Section 1981, which gave blacks for the first time the right to make and enforce contracts. This means the right to negotiate with employers over wages, hours and working conditions and to have access to the courts if an agreement is violated.

Among the advantages of Section 1981 is that an aggrieved individual can sue for punitive damages in addition to back pay. Punitive damages help compensate individuals for any suffering they experienced and are also aimed at deterring employees from engaging in further violations. Although the court sustained the validity of applying Section 1981 to the private sector—there was some concern the court would not, which prompted 179 senators and representatives to file a brief—it nevertheless gave Section 1981 a very nar-

row interpretation. The Supreme Court maintained that the right to make and enforce contracts applied only to the initial hiring process and not to discriminatory treatment on the job. To justify its position, the court majority claimed that this interpretation reflected the original intent of the post-Civil War Congress. That the Supreme Court should abide by the original intent of lawmakers has been a favorite theme of conservatives. But in reality the dedication of conservative justices to original intent is more rhetorical than actual. This case is certainly no exception.

What the legislators meant: The court completely ignored the commitment of the majority of the 39th Congress not only to end slavery but also to assure that Southern society would not devise subterfuges to control and manipulate the freed slaves. Right after the Civil War, two civil-rights bills were introduced. The first, which was meant as a temporary measure, also guaranteed blacks the right to make and enforce contracts. As an indication of congressional passion over civil rights issues, this bill made it a duty for the president to extend military protection and jurisdiction over cases where civil rights were violated. It also made violations of civil rights due to race, color or previous conditions of servitude, a criminal offense punishable by up to \$1,000 in fine or one year in jail, or both. Echoing the congressional mood, John Bingham, the congressman who drafted the equal protection and due process clauses of the 14th Amendment, stated, "A civil action is no remedy for a great public wrong and crime."

The bill was approved by Congress but successfully vetoed by the president. But the willingness to impose military means and criminal sanctions showed the seriousness of the Republican majority of Congress to enforce the civil rights of blacks. Indeed, the passionate speeches in Congress reflected strong enmity against the South and a great deal of anxiety and suspicion over its intentions of allowing the freed slaves the rights of citizens. Most Republicans realized that abolishing slavery was not sufficient. As one senator remarked, "Sir, what kind of freedom is that which is given the amendment of the Constitution if it is confined simply to the exemption of the freedman from sale and barter?" More than the negation of slavery was required, and that included—according to the senator—the freedom to make and enforce contracts. The civil-action bill, Section 1981, finally passed, obtaining the necessary two-thirds vote to override another presidential veto.

To apply Section 1981 only to the initial hiring process completely ignores the context in which this civil-rights law was approved. It was well known that many employers in the South would attempt in one way or another to undermine whatever initial arrangement was made with a black worker. As one member of Congress said in the debates: "They ought to be protected in their rights under contracts, especially

from the danger of being reduced by any process, direct or circuitous, to the condition of slavery from which we have rescued."

Clearly, the right to make contracts included rights under contract, because persistent violations by employers renders the right to make contracts illusory. The 39th Congress was inflamed by a report that confirmed that planters were employing fraud as well as force to keep the new freedmen

John Bingham, the author of the 14th Amendment, said that "a civil action is no remedy for a great public wrong and crime."

in a state of subjugation. Another representative bitterly objected that in one vicinity the various terms of employment, including working conditions, were being fixed among planters without any plans to negotiate terms with prospective black employees. For the government to have taken no responsibility beyond the initial employ-

ment process would have been a betrayal. A representative expressed the concern that the interests of blacks should not be forsaken "by a government which will in that case have made so shrewd and cruel a use of them."

Yet this is just what the Supreme Court majority did by misinterpreting the historical and legislative background of Section 1981. Although Patterson was hired as a teller, she was singled out because of her race to perform janitorial tasks. This kind of treatment is clearly a vestige of slavery, which is why protecting "rights under contract" and the right to make contracts were considered inseparable.

Section 1981 explicitly gives all persons the same right to make contracts as is enjoyed by white citizens. Patterson was clearly deprived of the equal right to contract because she was not really hired on terms similar to her white peers, no matter what she was told in the interview. And by refusing to recognize her complaints, the court has deprived Patterson of the right to enforce her contract.

Claiming deference to original intent, the Supreme Court conservatives instead have written their own law. But that job belongs to Congress. So while members of Congress and President Bush are seething over the right of protesters to shred the American flag, it is up to the rest of us to express our outrage over the Supreme Court's recent attempts to shred the American Constitution.

Harry Brill teaches sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

13

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By Tim Wall

Brooklyn Carnival bridges a world of cultural chasms

EASTERN PARKWAY IS A SIX-LANE avenue cutting through the West Indian neighborhood of Brooklyn. It is flanked on both sides by tree-dotted pedestrian malls; two access roads run along the outer perimeter of the malls. Beginning in the morning on Labor Day, a rhythmic throb fills the space between brownstones and brick apartment houses that line the parkway like the walls of a canyon.

Gradually, the component sounds can be sorted out: the click of hand-held rhythm instruments, music blaring from speakers on fire escapes, the buzz of conversation and the gentle hammering of steel drums. By noon the pedestrian malls and outer roadways are packed with people. Jerry-rigged booths set side by side display political and religious literature, T-shirts, artisan crafts and an apparently endless array of Caribbean and Asian food specialties.

Shortly after midday the big truck-driven floats start trundling down the parkway's central lanes, and the sound level goes up a few notches. These "floats" aren't the sedate, flower-festooned stage settings the name implies. They are little more than mobile platforms for stacks of loudspeakers, looking like something out of a *Road Warrior* movie in their pristine mechanical ugliness. Dancers and rhythm bands, some in costume and some clad simply in shorts and T-shirts, are perched on top, moving sinuously to staccato metallic waves of soca music.

Odd birds of a feather: Following on foot in the wake of each float are the "mas" (masquerade) bands. The marchers' costumes of sequins and feathers are coordinated to the theme of each band. Many of the themes are drawn from those developed at the Trinidad Mardi Gras and reflect open-eyed curiosity about the wider world, depicting South and North American Indians, African tribes and mainstays of legendary Western history like Trojans, Greeks, Romans and Atilla's Huns. Bees and butterflies and monstrous hybrid animals are also popular.

For the 1989 Labor Day Carnival, Peter Minshall, the most renowned of Trinidad's band designers, flew in to orchestrate a "Caribbean Baroque" performance-art piece melding the Caribbean look with the florid swirls of 17th-century European design.

Some of the masquerades relate back to the old French carnivals: creole Pierrots; the evil Moko-Jumbie; assortments of devils and demons, including the mischievous Jab-Jab; and Midnight Robbers in wide-brimmed black hats. Other motifs are contemporary but equally touched by the fantastical. Over the last few years, those "playing mas" have included "Punks" cavorting to the concept of Darkness and a devil with horns, tail, pitchfork and an attache case labeled "Wall Street."



Brooklyn's polycultural Labor Day Carnival always has thousands dancing in the streets.

Further into the afternoon, nearly a million people are gathered near the parkway. The distinction between spectator and participant, tenuous earlier in the day, breaks down completely, and throngs join the costumed marchers in a surging river that breaks up into smaller

REVELRY

streams following the side streets into the neighborhoods. The dance style known as "whining," which involves a close intermeshing of pelvic movements, takes over. One woman in turquoise feathers specializes in walking up to Irish cops and engaging their midsections in the classic soca movement, to the embarrassment of the cops and the amusement of their buddies.

The mas' band members come from the 1.5 million people of non-Hispanic Caribbean descent in the New York metropolitan area, and from other cities with large West Indian populations such as Toronto, Montreal and Los Angeles. Some revelers even fly in from the Caribbean islands. They prepare for the Brooklyn Carnival months in advance and choose their band—buying in for as little as \$75 for a basic costume. For \$500 or more they get an elaborate wire-reinforced rig and a starring role in the street festivities. Band members visit Brooklyn social clubs to help sew and assemble the costumes.

"My job is to take the ideas the band members have for the next parade and boil them down to a specific theme and specific costumes," says Randy Brewster, a mas' band leader with Trinidadian roots who operates out of a Brooklyn storefront.

Revolutionary surge: Brewster's designer, Geoffrey Denner, talked about the evolution of the Carnival in Trinidad, which both his father and grandfather worked on: "It started back in the days of slavery.... When the bossman gave you some time off, you mock the boss, do a dance to make a fool out of him. Because you're in a costume with a mask, you're safe. In the first parades, we used French costumes, like Pierrot du Noir. Then there was a revolutionary surge. We began projecting more or less our own ideas, what you would call theater or art."

"But the themes expanded to include the whole world. You see, in Trinidad we have this one common culture, but it's made up of all the people who have come to the island, the Indians, the Africans, the French, Hindus from India, Moslems from Syria, Chinese, South Americans and those from the other Caribbean islands. So naturally, the Carnival decided to take in all these people and their traditions."

Slave dance traditions worked their way into the Carnival after French settlers were allowed by the

Spanish colonial administration to move to Trinidad in 1783. As slaveholding plantation owners, the French came to dominate the aristocracy and installed their own polite version of pre-Lenten masquerades. After slavery was abolished in 1833, the African population began taking part in Carnival in a public way to celebrate Emancipa-

As always, there are those who don't think the Carnival spirit is such a good idea.

tion. Jump-up road marches and house-to-house parties filled the days between Dimanche Gras ("Fat Sunday") and Mardi Gras ("Fat Tuesday").

Fight for your right to party: The calypso (now usually called "soca," for soul-calypso) was integral to Carnival; until a few years ago it was rarely performed in public even on its native island of Trinidad except in the months preceding Mardi Gras. Descended from the social grapevine singing of West African griots, in the early days calypso lyrics contained code words signaling slave escapes. In the 19th century making obscene fun of the most distinguished ladies and gentlemen of

the aristocracy was popular during Carnival. Not surprisingly, colonial authorities were less than thrilled with these carousings. On at least one occasion crowds fought the police in hand-to-hand combat to maintain their right to hold Carnival parades.

The street celebrations of the freed slaves were actually closer in spirit to the original European festivals than the formal costume parties of the plantation owners. The historian Mikhail Bakhtin wrote about medieval carnivals as days when social distinction was abolished: food was available in abundance to all (hence the name "Fat Tuesday"); costumes and masks obliterated social rank along with individual identity, transvestism ran wild and criminals would not be arrested. A "fool" dressed like a court jester was hailed as King, and leave was granted to insult the real king.

Elements of social conflict continue to show up in Brooklyn's Labor Day jam. Hand-lettered placards at the 1989 event called for an end to apartheid in South Africa, and there was a plethora of Dinkins-for-mayor campaign posters. Dinkins himself worked the crowd and delivered an address from the reviewing stand, a harbinger of the imminent deposition of King Koch. (Mayor Koch, tied up at the rear of labor's Labor Day parade in Manhattan, was unable to attend the fête, and Republican candidate Rudolph Giuliani declined an invitation to make an appearance.)

As always, there are those who don't think the Carnival spirit is such a good idea. Civic authorities and newspaper editorials in Trinidad chide the population for overdoing the revelry, suggesting that if all the energy and expenditure that go into Carnival preparations were invested instead in the serious business of economic endeavor, the people would be better off.

One senses, however, that they are equally uneasy with the Carnival's implication that political convention is a human creation liable to change. Carnivals are notable for their strong collective ambience. Intellectuals can talk about the concept of collective art, but none has come close to mounting a work that can match carnival's color, sweep and verve.

Brooklyn's Labor Day outpouring, with its enthusiasm for world culture, is characterized by an air of genial toleration. A million people crowd New York City's streets in hot, humid weather with a wide variety of national and racial groups present, and there are no altercations to be seen and hardly a voice raised in argument. The week before in Brooklyn, a racially motivated murder in Bensonhurst triggered ugly public shows of bigotry. The contrast between the two scenes is by itself indicative of the tonic virtues of the Carnival spirit. ■

Tim Wall is a writer living in New York.

THE ARTS

By J. Poet

James Talley walks a country mile to strum up a little success

IN 1976 JAMES TALLEY WAS ON A ROLL. His first two albums for Capitol Records, *Got No Bread, No Milk, No Money, But We Sure Got a Lot of Love* and *Tryin' Like the Devil*, had garnered more raves from the rock press than most country and folk artists get in a lifetime. He'd appeared at Jimmy Carter's inaugural ball on a bill with the Allman Brothers and other rock'n'roll heavies. "Are They Gonna Make Us Outlaws Again?" Talley's first single from *Tryin' Like the Devil*, was getting airplay on country and rock stations. He was touring regularly and making a living doing what he loved—playing a down-to-earth brand of no-frills country music.

Yet a year later, Talley's records were impossible to find. Another Next Big Thing had vanished without a trace.

"What happened," Talley said ruefully, speaking from his home in Nashville, "was that I made one of the worst career moves of my life. I'd just hooked up with a new manager, and he convinced me that Capitol Records wasn't doing what they

MUSIC

should for me. He told me if I could get out of my Capitol contract we could do great things together. I gave him permission to break my contract, which he did, but after messing around for about a year and getting nowhere he disappeared back into the woodwork. I've never heard from him since.

"In retrospect, I realize he was looking out for himself. My contract didn't have any provisions for a manager 'cause I was managing myself when I signed it. He wanted a slice of the pie for himself, and when that didn't work out he was gone."

Capitol banishment: Talley tried to get back on Capitol Records, but breaking the contract had given him a reputation as a troublemaker. His records were deleted from the catalogue, and his career hit the skids. "The only one who helped me in those years was Mort Cooperman, the guy who owns the Lone Star Cafe. He literally supported me and my family for a year while I tried to shop a new demo around, but when you don't have a record out and you don't have tour support from a label, you lose your name recognition and your career winds down. I had to fire my band and play gigs by myself, just me and the guitar. I remember one time driving 750 miles to open a show for Doc Watson, and at that point I began wondering if it was worth it."

Talley eventually put his music career on hold and studied for a real-estate license. "Even if you're good and get a decent break, the music business is still a crap shoot," Talley says. "In real estate, if you play by the rules and apply yourself, you'll

eventually make a living at it."

Talley says he'd wanted to make music ever since he heard his first folk song from his mother. He was in a number of folk and rockabilly groups in high school and says that his father, a worker in a plutonium

"Everybody worked on spec, hoping we'd be able to sell it to someone."

No CBSing: When John Hammond Sr., the legendary CBS talent scout, heard the record, he tried to get Talley signed to Columbia, but the Nashville standard in the early

Love on their own label. After selling several thousand copies by word of mouth, Capitol Records finally picked up the record.

"Capitol was good to me," Talley says, "but record companies have no idea how to market someone that can't be pigeonholed. It might be easier these days with people like Randy Travis around, but back then I was the only one playing simple country music. I ran into the guy who signed me to Capitol the other day, and he said, 'I guess you were 10 years ahead of yourself.'" Talley laughs. "Sometimes being ahead of your time can be just as bad as being trapped in the past."

Despite Talley's bad luck with American record companies, the story has a happy ending. "In 1985 I got a call from a German guy named Richard Weize," Talley says. "He has a CD label in Germany called Bear Family, and he's had a lot of success putting out digital reissues of American country music and early rock'n'roll. He told me that I was really popular in West Germany. He'd licensed my records from EMI for European release, and he asked me if I'd like to play a couple of gigs for his label's 10th anniversary."

Weize sent a plane ticket, and Talley went to Germany to play "one of my best gigs ever, backed by a band that spoke no English." Talley returned to Nashville with a European CD deal. "It was all done on a handshake," he says almost incredulously. "Bear Family is bringing out my first four albums on double CDs—*Got No Bread, No Milk, No Money, But We Sure Got a Lot of Love* and *Tryin' Like the Devil* on one and *Blackjack Choir* and *Ain't It Somethin'* on another—as well as my latest, *Love Songs and the Blues*, on a single disc. There are close to 30 million people in Europe, and they have an appreciation for American music that you may have to be

an outsider to have, so we'll see what happens."

How about the American record companies? "I have an attorney that's looking into an American deal, but I'm 45 years old now and I have two kids and a wife, and I don't have any desire to go out and kill myself on the road like I used to do, playing to eight people for \$75. I still write about working people—I like to mix swing, country, folk and rock on one record—and Nashville still doesn't

"He sells real estate—how can he talk about integrity?"

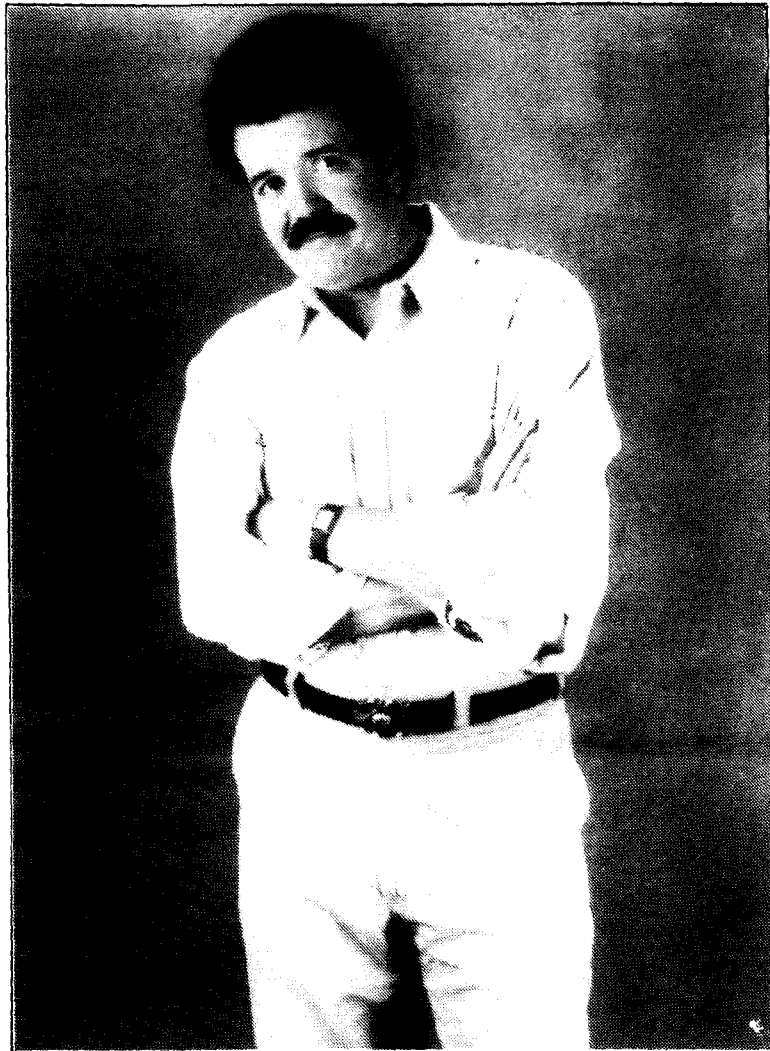
know how to market people who try to span categories.

"Some people look at me, and they think, 'He sells real estate, how can he talk about integrity?' They don't realize how precious what I do is to me. You know, Charles Ives sold insurance so he could write the kind of music he wanted to write—and I paid for every note on my last two albums out of my own pocket, without a record company telling me what to do, just the way I did when I was starting out. I'd like to devote more time to music. I'd like to make my living as a songwriter, but I'm not gonna starve while I'm waiting for a record deal to come around."

"When I saw Robin Williams in *Dead Poets Society*, there was one line that really rang true for me. Early in the movie he tells the class, 'We need doctors and lawyers and bankers, but poetry is what makes life worth living.' That's how I feel about music. Real estate sustains me, but music is what makes my life worth living."

James Talley's music is available on cassette from the artist at Torreon Productions, P.O. Box 120722, Nashville, TN 37212, on CD by mail from Bear Family, Achtern Dahl 30, 2864 Vollersode, West Germany 0 4794 1399, or Down Home Music, 10341 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530.

J. Poet is a music critic living in California.



James Talley: a Next Big Thing who vanished without a trace.

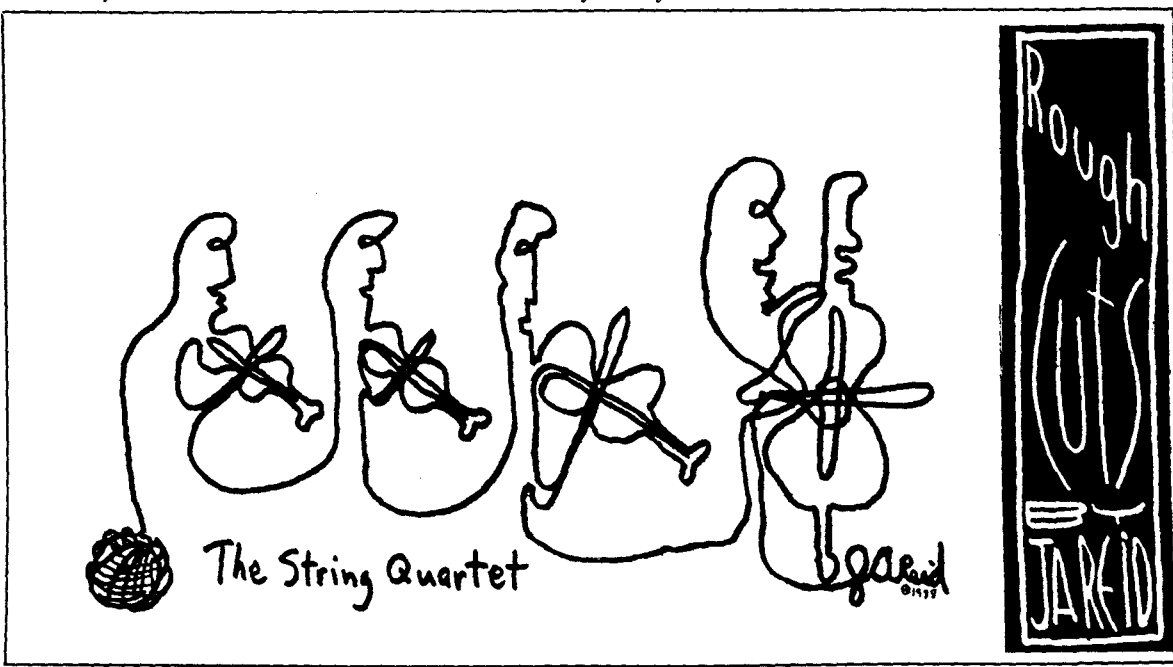
processing plant, thought "Bob Wills was the last word, so I had an early education in what you'd call roots music."

Talley dreamed of a musical career but got through the University of Albuquerque, N.M., selling washing machines door to door. And after graduation he worked briefly for the county welfare department. "I remember interviewing a woman for welfare one time. While we were talking a rat came out and ran across the floor. Her kid was sitting there eating a bowl of rice. The rat ran through the rice, and the kid kept eating. He didn't even blink. At that point I promised myself that I was going to write songs that mattered. Songs about how people really live and feel."

In 1968, after his first marriage failed, Talley loaded to truck and drove to Nashville. He worked various odd jobs until a friend told him about a man who wanted to build a recording studio. Talley worked on the project in return for studio time.

"When the studio was done, I called up some musician friends and we made an album," Talley says.

'70s was polished pop by singers like Kenny Rogers or proven sellers like Waylon and Willie. Talley's real-life, almost-folksy songs were the last thing the average record executive wanted to hear. After being almost signed several times, Talley and his friends put together some money and pressed *Got No Bread, No Milk, No Money, But We Sure Got a Lot of*



Antifascism in American Art

By Cécile Whiting
Yale University Press
238 pp., \$32.50

By Victor Margolin

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN political efficacy and artistic value is one that all artists who strive to make meaningful social statements must face. This issue was nowhere more pronounced for American artists than in the years between the crash of 1929 and the end of World War II. During those years, fascism and its potential to prompt war was a powerful determinant in the choice of subject matter and style.

Fascism demanded intense responses from artists, who had to struggle with its shifting definitions and the unstable alliances of those who perpetuated and opposed it. The changing definitions of fascism created much confusion for leftist American artists and account for the widely divergent definitions of anti-fascist art that Cécile Whiting presents in *Antifascism in American Art*.

She identifies six groups of artists, ranging from the partisan cartoonists of the Communist Party publications in the years before the Popular Front to abstractionists such as Mark Rothko and Adolph Gottlieb whose work helped prepare the way for abstract expressionism in the '50s. Inherent in the progression she traces from polemics to elliptical representations of mythic subjects is the disillusion of many leftist artists with the stylistic constraints of Soviet cultural policy and the equation of artistic experimentation with democratic values.

Party all the time: American cartoonists who published in the *New Masses* and the Communist-supported journals of the John Reed Clubs followed the Communist Party line and accepted Stalin's opposition to social fascism. But the organization of the Popular Front in the mid-'30s broadened the base of opposition to fascism, uniting Communists and non-Communists. Whiting sees the Popular Front as an important force in the emergence of a less-sectarian and aesthetically freer art.

This art began to reflect the tension between political engagement and the aspiration to more than polemics. This tension was inherent in much of the work that Whiting discusses, and she raises issues about the relation of political argumentation to more universal artistic statements. In the work of early American abstractionist Stuart Davis, for example, we begin to see a shift to a more experimental art that represents political subjects less blatantly (or not at all).

Whiting's discussion of Davis is particularly salient because he embodies so well the tension between the artist as polemicist and as innovator. A founder of the American



Workers confront fascist leaders in William Gropper's *Rot Front*, originally published in *The New Masses* (February 1933).

The risks of battling fascism on two fronts

Artists' Congress, a Popular Front organization not aligned with a specific political or cultural policy, Davis developed an argument that equated modernist experimentation with the freedom that democracy allowed and fascism prevented. The timing of this argument was such that it could be used not only against the Nazis but also against the Soviet Union. The latter was increasingly being identified with fascism because of Stalin's horrible purges as well as the country's insistence on socialist realism as its official form of art.

Muddying the waters: Modernists such as Davis used the Soviet Union's restrictive policies toward artists as a stalking-horse to oppose nationalistic art in America and also to counter art that was used as propaganda. One of Davis' prime enemies was Thomas Hart Benton, who had painted realistic regional scenes in the late '20s and '30s and then did a series of strong propagandistic paintings that showed Axis fascists as subhuman brutes. Yet Davis criticized Benton and other regionalist painters for being "anti-modern, regressive and even fascist in style and subject matter."

By the late '30s, when Davis and others were equating fascism with artistic conservatism, their claim that modernism was the embodiment of democratic values diverted the struggle of American artists from anti-fascism to a battle between

modernists and anti-modernists. This battle was linked to a growing American suspicion of propaganda in the wake of World War I.

The result was a paradoxical situation in which art that overtly por-

ART

trayed the enemy or celebrated American values in a conservative style lost credibility among the cognoscenti. Conversely, conservative paintings of historical figures and folk heroes that were more easily accessible gained a more popular following.

Whiting discusses a number of artists sympathetic to the modernist argument such as Philip Evergood, Ralston Crawford, Jared French and Ben Shahn, all of whom began to use allegory to depict scenes of war without reference to a specific enemy. The broader readings these paintings invited tended to justify them more as art because they possessed fewer qualities of overt propaganda. In the book's final section, Whiting cites a radio broadcast in which Rothko and Gottlieb defended their paintings against the befuddlement of a well-known critic by claim-

Fascism demanded intense responses from all artists.

ing that the paintings' primitive qualities invoked not only "the immediate presence of terror and fear," but also "the eternal insecurity of life."

Whiting invites us to read the works of Rothko and Gottlieb as an alternative method of opposing fascism while claiming that these artists rejected the idea of taking any political position at all. This problematic conclusion suggests an overgenerous faith in the modernists' arguments that they were opposing fascism by espousing artistic innovation.

Unintentional fallacy: A result of this interpretation is Whiting's implicit espousal of the modernists' distaste for propaganda. This comes through in her interpretations of various paintings such as William Gropper's depictions of American folk heroes that "avoided the collapse of folklore into explicit propaganda," and paintings by Gropper and Evergood that "speak in an allegorical rather than a strictly topical language, broadening their themes beyond a straightforward depiction of evil dictators, cruel acts or noble resistance." It is also evident in her decision not to discuss overtly propagandistic forms such as posters. She describes several allegorical paintings by Shahn, for example, but makes no mention of the powerful poster he did to oppose the murder of innocent townspeople in Lidice, Czechoslovakia.

I suspect that Whiting's preference is for an art of substance that can make sufficient reference to a political event without being reduced to mere propaganda. Much of the work she writes about falls into this category. The progression of her narrative is such that she begins with propagandistic cartoons and ends with abstract mythic paintings, which, she says, prepared the way for abstract expressionism after the war.

She treats what she claims to be various responses to fascism but establishes no basis for evaluating their efficacy. She speaks of the "compelling arguments that emerged from the fight against fascism about the dangers of political and nationalistic art" in order to justify the rise of postwar American abstraction. This narrative itself reflects a modernist orientation and relegates to second order the continuous tradition of realist polemical art that also derived from the anti-fascist experience.

The book is thoroughly researched and provides insightful interpretations of many works of art. But the author too readily accepts the modernists' equation of abstraction and democracy, an argument that evaporates with the disappearance of a repressive enemy against which to pose it.

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New German Cinema:

A History

By Thomas Elsaesser
Rutgers University Press
430 pp., \$14.95

Case Histories

By Alexander Kluge
Translated by Leila Vennewitz
Holmes & Meier
203 pp., \$19.95

West German Filmmakers on Film: Visions and Voices

Edited by Eric Rentschler
Holmes & Meier
262 pp., \$22.50

By Karen Rosenberg

German cinema: between state of the art and art of the state

argues that filmmakers, by maintaining that cinema is an autonomous art form, avoided the uncomfortable topic of patronage and the obligations and restraints that it engenders. For him, the neoromantic image of the filmmaker engaged in compulsive self-expression was primarily a strategy designed to win the loyalty of viewers who were also obsessed with defining their identity.

Elsaesser's theory explains the rather annoying penchant of some well-known West German directors for posing as lofty geniuses. Much film criticism has merely echoed such claims. Elsaesser is to be congratulated for demystifying them. While I would never ignore the self-serving urge for fame and fortune, I wouldn't exaggerate it either. The typical German director still feels marginal to Hollywood, since U.S. productions dominate the German film market. And since the industry offers up notoriously limited terms for debate, the popularity of Hollywood movies has profound political repercussions outside the U.S. as well as within. So German filmmakers, in fighting for themselves, have also been waging a battle for an alternative political culture.

There was, and is, a desire on the part of many German filmmakers to create a lively, oppositional public sphere—an arena where ideas, beliefs and images interact. This goal was articulated in *The Public Sphere and Experience* (1972), an influential book by Kluge and sociologist Oskar Negt, which will be published in an English translation by the University of Minnesota Press next year.

In light of Kluge's theory, the production of provocative books and essays by West German filmmakers should be seen—at least in part—as attempts to dislodge the public from the passive-consumption mode. The goal of many directors polemicists was not just cash in the box office,

but critical minds in the theater. If, in practice, filmmakers often floundered when trying to create movies that would engage the spectator in a kind of dialogue, that's not surprising. Elsaesser faults many directors for overexplicitness, a condescending attitude to their characters or an ingratiating style.

But one might also note the difficulty of building a cinema of ideas in post-fascist Germany. "We had no

CINEMA

fathers, only grandfathers," Werner Herzog once said. That overstatement meant that the postwar generation felt it could not use much of its parents' wisdom, for it had been tainted by Nazi values.

"I do not believe that there is anywhere else where people have suffered such a loss of confidence in images of their own, their own stories and myths, as we have," wrote Wim Wenders in another hyperbolic statement, which is included in Rentschler's book. Some directors, including Wenders, found a surrogate father in the U.S.—one they could rebel against. And in Hollywood movies they also discovered the mark of German émigré filmmakers, a legacy they could draw upon.

Passing the torch: If the manifestoes of postwar German directors are reminiscent of the polemics of artists of the teens and '20s, that is no coincidence. There was a conscious attempt to reclaim a critical tradition in arts and letters that had been buried (sometimes literally) by the fascists. That meant going back to Rosa Luxemburg, Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Tucholsky, as Elsaesser notes. Bitomsky and others add the Marxist cultural theorists Walter Benjamin and Theodore Adorno to that list.

The image of a torch being passed from grandparents to grandchildren appeared at various points in post-

war German film history. Werner Herzog walked, mind you, from Munich to Paris with the cans of his film *Kaspar Hauser* in his knapsack to visit the aged Lotte Eisner. Elsaesser is right on target when he stresses the deliberate symbolism of this act. That the historian of expressionist cinema, émigré Jew and woman, friend of F.W. Murnau and Fritz Lang, personal assistant to Henri Langlois (founding father of the Cinematheque Française and patron saint of the French *nouvelle vague*) should—on what might easily have been her deathbed—give a young German filmmaker her blessing, by assuring him that his work was once more "legitimate German culture," could itself be read as a founding myth of origins and identity.

As Elsaesser points out, the claim of filmmakers to be the inheritors of the best in German culture had another effect. It justified state expenditure on film. Politicians and voters could feel that their money was going to a worthy goal. German cinema, argues Elsaesser, implicitly presented the case that West rather than East Germany is the legitimate heir to the critical tradition in German thought. And film, which is easy to transport (compared to theater or fine art) and which requires relatively little translation, could argue this case to the world.

I might add that film could suggest that West Germany had overcome its Nazi past. A people that had once exterminated homosexuals has not only funded gay filmmakers Rosa von Praunheim and Werner Schroeter but toured their works abroad under the auspices of the Goethe Institute (a retrospective of the work of Ulrike Ottinger is being planned by the Goethe Institute of the U.S. and Canada for 1990). I can't imagine the U.S. Information Agency doing the same for U.S. filmmakers who attack homophobia or present

other-than-mainstream images of same-sex relationships.

The splintered scene: One thesis of Elsaesser's *New German Cinema* is that postwar German filmmakers were more successful in winning government support than in gaining large numbers of viewers at home. Only certain "target" audiences were won: Wenders appealed to melancholy, alienated men, rather like his heroes; films by feminists attracted women; the avant-garde, generally not funded by television and the state, spoke to other avant-garde artists; leftist filmmakers talked to the generation of 1968, etc.

To Elsaesser, this splintered film scene suggests that filmmakers have failed in their mission. To me, it says that the public has yet to be educated about what a public sphere would look, feel and sound like. I'd be willing to bet that ordinary citizens have not even been informed that dialogue with a film is possible. All the blame should not fall on filmmakers, especially those who have written about their goals, for that state of affairs. Rather, it says something about the way schools teach—how they explain the concepts of art and democracy. And this is not a German problem alone, of course.

With the post-1968 backlash, the radical political concept of a participatory, oppositional public sphere has met a lot of resistance, including some from kids who'd rather try for entry into the elite than expend their energy on risky attempts at social change. In Germany, the under-30 generation has turned away from many directors of the New German Cinema. I heard a lot of praise for Steven Spielberg from young Germans last summer, and I saw long lines for *Dirty Dancing*. But from that experience I'm not willing to conclude with Elsaesser that New German Cinema's political program has collapsed and that it offers "no aesthetic concept, other than a homemade kit of ideas borrowed from *Cahiers du Cinéma* cinephilia of over 30 years ago or from the other arts." This sounds like the "stuck in the '60s" epithet North Americans use to push each other to the right. I don't think that Kluge's dictum that "spectators must all become collaborators," for example, should be dismissed so glibly.

Rather than losing currency, the idea that art is an open form which demands the participation of the viewer reader in creating meaning is gaining ground. Mikhail Bakhtin, as well as Becht and Benjamin, made that point long ago, and it is finally catching on among academics and journalists in film, art and literary circles. Whether this theory is one more fashion, to be replaced soon by another, remains to be seen.

A version of this article appeared in *The Independent*, a film and video monthly.

Karen Rosenberg is a writer whose work has appeared in *Sight & Sound*, *The Nation* and the *Boston Globe*.

© 1989 Karen Rosenberg



A scene from *Rose King* by Werner Schroeter: of gay themes and state subsidies.

Mark of the double bind: To a certain extent, all this writing bespeaks a profound dissatisfaction with West German film culture among directors. In the early '60s that dissatisfaction centered around the lack of production and distribution opportunities for German directors. With a series of state-legislated funding measures—well chronicled in Thomas Elsaesser's *New German Cinema*—many German filmmakers finally got a chance to make features and air them on late-night television.

But according to Elsaesser, state subsidies also created a double bind for West German directors. They had to prove their independence so viewers wouldn't regard their creations as "official art." Yet they couldn't give the hand that was feeding them too sharp a bite. Elsaesser

Nixon

Continued from page 13

or on the campus, with a succession of illegal actions leading up to the break-in at Democratic headquarters at the Watergate Hotel. As Ambrose correctly argues, Nixon had no choice but to cover up the circumstances of the Watergate break-in because any thorough investigation of it would have unearthed four years of skulduggery.

Nixon's fury against his opponents reflected the repressed rage of his childhood. In his memoir, *Before the Fall*, speechwriter William Safire recalls Nixon's "deep, dark rage." And White House aide John Ehrlichman once described Nixon's anger as the "flat dark side of the moon." Had not the Watergate scandal intervened, Nixon planned in his second term to unleash the full power of the government against his political opponents. "They're asking for it, and they're going to get it," Nixon told his counsel John Dean in 1972.

The realist: Yet the same man who bombed Hanoi and who wanted to firebomb the liberal Brookings Institution also challenged the most basic axioms of postwar American foreign policy—axioms that he had helped erect. There was a connection, however, between the two seemingly disparate parts of Nixon's program.

In *Detente and Confrontation*, Brookings Institution arms expert Raymond Garthoff argues persuasively that Nixon's revision of American relations with the Soviet Union and China followed directly from his strategy to end the Vietnam War. He wanted to use the promise of better relations to persuade the Soviet Union and China to pressure the North Vietnamese to withdraw from South

Vietnam, and he wanted to use relations with China to increase pressure on the Soviet Union.

But the president knew that he was permanently altering the structure of Cold War relations. To endorse arms negotiations based on a principle of strategic parity was to acknowledge that the Cold War had ended and that neither side had won. To renew relations with China was to recognize the complexity of national communism and the absence of a worldwide communist movement.

Some journalists later credited Henry Kissinger with Nixon's foreign policy innovations, but Ambrose makes a good case that Kissinger was initially skeptical of Nixon's initiatives toward the Soviet Union and China. When Nixon aide Haldeman told Kissinger in 1969 that the president planned to visit China before the end of his second term, Kissinger reportedly replied, "Fat chance." Nixon made it before the end of his first term.

He also deserves some credit for the series of bold economic measures that he initiated. In 1969 he embraced his aide Daniel P. Moynihan's family assistance plan, which would have substituted a guaranteed annual income for the welfare system. In January 1971, justifying his use of deficits to prime the economy, he announced in a nationally televised interview, "I am now a Keynesian in economics." In August 1971, recognizing that the U.S. could no longer sustain the world economy, he abandoned the gold standard created at Bretton Woods in 1945 and initiated wage-price controls and a surcharge on imports.

In 1973 columnist Walter Lippmann aptly summed up Nixon's positive political achievement. "His role has been that of a man who had to liquidate, defuse, deflate

the exaggerations of the romantic period of American imperialism and American inflation," Lippmann told an interviewer. "Inflation of promises, inflation of hopes, the Great Society, American supremacy—all that had to be deflated because it was all beyond our power."

Nixon and Disraeli: Moynihan once compared Nixon to 19th century British conservative Benjamin Disraeli, who transformed the British Tories from a party of reactionary landowners, committed to limiting suffrage to the propertied and to preserving the Corn Laws (a tariff against agricultural imports), to a modern capitalist party. Disraeli moved the party away from the Corn Laws, and he won significant worker support by co-opting the Whig issue of extending male suffrage. In addition, he embraced the rudiments of a welfare state. Disraeli's counterparts were Germany's Otto von Bismarck and America's Theodore Roosevelt.

Nixon similarly transformed the Republican Party so that it has never been the same since 1968. He also challenged the basic tenets of Republican foreign and economic policy. But as president, Nixon failed in the most important way in which Disraeli succeeded. Disraeli created a new unity of politics and policy that survived for almost a century. Nixon, by contrast, created a new right-wing politics, but these politics subverted rather than sustained his domestic and geopolitical innovations.

A contradiction lingered between Nixon's politics and his policies. He tried to win votes by brazen and cynical appeals to flag, family and race. These appeals fed Cold War anti-communism and an imperial nostalgia about America being "number one." But Nixon based his strategy of detente and his aban-

donment of Bretton Woods on a recognition that America's power had become limited and that the U.S. would have to come to terms with its former enemies.

Nixon recognized the contradiction. In the winter of 1972, political aide Doug Hallett, made a number of suggestions to Nixon for the coming campaign. Hallett wanted Nixon to declare that "the hyper-individualistic—we're 'number one'—frontier American philosophy is bankrupt and outdated." The president wrote back, "Wrong on this—typical Ivy League." He believed that America was no longer clearly "number one," but he also believed that saying so was bad politics—an insight that Jimmy Carter's defeat in 1980 would later confirm.

Nixon's policies paved the way for the post-Cold War world of the late '80s. But his politics also opened the door for the triumph of Reagan conservatism. In 1976 Reagan used Nixon's political strategy to run against President Ford and his secretary of state, Kissinger. Reagan charged that Ford and Kissinger had sold out to the Soviet Union. In 1980 Reagan ran on a platform that confirmed Nixon's political beliefs but repudiated all of his most ambitious foreign and economic policies.

The U.S. continues to suffer from Nixon's political legacy. His politics of conservative reaction, espoused by Bush in 1988, still prevail and prevent reconsideration of America's world position and of the relation between the government and the economy. If the biographer's challenge is to discover how Nixon could be both swine and savant, the nation's challenge is to turn the Nixon revolution on its head, repudiating his politics but reaffirming the wisdom of his global outlook.

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CALENDAR

Use the Calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is **\$25.00 for one insertion, \$35.00 for two insertions and \$15.00 for each additional insert**, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of **ITT Calendar**.

NEW YORK

October 1-8

THE NEW YORK MARXIST SCHOOL

SUNDAY, Oct. 1 - Marx's Capital, 10-session class with Mary Boger begins, 6 p.m.

MONDAY, Oct. 2 - Understanding Perestroika, 5-session class with Art Maglin begins, 8 p.m.; The Twentieth-Century Socialist novel, 8-session class with Graham Bottrill begins, 8 p.m.

TUESDAY, Oct. 3 - Yanique Joseph and Larry Feiner of the Green Party discuss Economic Reforms North-South, 6 p.m.; Intro to Marxism, 10-session class with Randy Martin begins, 6 p.m.; East Asia and U.S. Imperialism, 10-session class with Marv Gettleman begins, 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, Oct. 5 - Julie Graham of Rethinking Marxism discusses the changing labor capital compact, 8 p.m.

SATURDAY, Oct. 7 - In Performance: Interstice, jazz at its best, 8 p.m., \$6.

SUNDAY, Oct. 8 - Art Opening, Layouts by Keith Christensen, 6 p.m.

All events take place at the New York Marxist School, 79 Leonard St., New York, NY 10013, (212) 941-0332. Lectures \$5.

CHICAGO

October 6-8

"Palestinian Statehood: Justice, Liberation and Democracy." The Palestine Human Rights Campaign urges you to join us in Chicago the weekend of October 6-8 for our 12th annual conference. Featured speakers will include: Faisal Hussein, Israel Shakah, Nabil Sha'ath and Philip Klutznick, among many others. For more information, contact PHRC at 220 S. State, #1308, Chicago, IL 60604, (312) 987-1830.

October 14

GREENPEACE is hosting a rally to call attention to Japan's impending hunt of 400 whales in the Antarctic.

The organization is calling on the U.S. government to utilize the Pelly Amendment to sanction Japan for its illegitimate "research" whaling. The rally will be held at 1:00 p.m. in Daley Plaza, Washington and Dearborn streets. A life-sized "petition whale" will be signed by participants at the rally and delivered to the prime minister of Japan by Greenpeace. For more information, contact Lee Mittermann, Ocean Ecology Campaigner, Greenpeace Great Lakes (312)666-3305.

October 16

The first Sidney Hillman Memorial Lecture will take place at 7:30 p.m. in Room 324 (Illinois Room), Chicago Circle Center, University of Illinois at Chicago, 710 S. Halsted. Esther Peterson (New Deal activist, consumerist and ACTWU staffer) is the featured speaker. For information call (312) 996-2623. Funded by Illinois Humanities Council, ACTWU-Midwest and the Jewish Labor Committee.

LOVELAND, OH

October 27-29

Grailville presents "Women Power Politics," a weekend for women of faith from various ethnic groups, races and classes to present their agendas for changing the structures of society that oppress women. Featured speakers include Stephanie Larsen, Jeanette Loanzon, Jackie Di Salvo and Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz. The program will emphasize a political analysis, focusing on the forces in the U.S. and internationally that are preventing or facilitating such structural changes. For information or registration, write or call Jeanette Loanzon, Grailville Programs, 932 O'Bannonville Rd., Loveland, OH 45140. (513) 683-2340.

WASHINGTON, DC

November 17-19

Annual Meeting, Workers Education Local 189. Saturday, November 18 features "Teaching About Labor Issues in the Middle East" at the Dupont Plaza Hotel, Washington, DC. For information call (617) 599-7791. Work Peace and Justice singalong at 8 p.m.

HELP WANTED

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CLASSIFIEDS

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ORGANIZER. Bright energetic person with a vision of empowering women sought as **UNION ORGANIZER**. Experience preferred. Moderate travel. Send resume to: Kim Hodge, SCIU, 1216 E. McMillan #306, Cincinnati, OH 45206.

SOLIDARITY. Progressive development and information agency seeks dynamic, committed person to direct fundraising program for humanitarian aid to Third World social change movements. Experience needed in major gift solicitation, small donor outreach, budgeting and staff management. People of color strongly urged to apply. Send resume and letter to Grassroots International, P.O. Box 312, Cambridge, MA 02139.

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POLITICAL ORGANIZERS (Volunteers) wanted to work with **FAIR**, the media watch-group. Activists needed to coordinate campaigns against bias, for example, at **NIGHTLINE**, PBS, Central America coverage, etc. Send resume to **FAIR**, 130 West 25th St., NYC, NY 10001.

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PERSONALS

THE LONELY MAN in dire need of correspondence. Please write: Ricky White, Camp 7, #62655, Parchman, MS 38738.

BLACK WRITER-POET in dire need of communication correspondence. Clarence Jones, 87A7347, Shawangunk Correctional Facility, Box 700, Wallkill, NY 12589.

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LIFE IN HELL

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MY LIFE WITH AKBAR
BY JEFF

MY LIFE WITH AKBAR
BY JEFF

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CHAPTER II Answers
CHAPTER III The Mystery of Akbar
CHAPTER IV Akbar Revealed
CHAPTER V Conclusion

CHAPTER I Questions about Akbar
What is it about Akbar? What makes him tick? Why is he so adorable? These are just some of the questions I am asked every day.

CHAPTER II Answers
If the truth be known, I never know how to answer.

CHAPTER III The Mystery of Akbar
You see, Akbar is an enigma. He is a puzzle. You don't know what he is thinking. Maybe that is why people like him so much.

CHAPTER IV Akbar Revealed
All I know is this: Akbar is spiritually enlightened. His fashion sense is impeccable. He is possessed of an almost canine sensuality.

CHAPTER V Conclusion
He is kind, yet he is crafty. He is serene, yet he is unpredictable. He is stunningly handsome. And he is unique.

And that's good enough for me.

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Weak in review

Nessitivity: The Suffix Glut

By Arthur Kunst
Printing Press
257 pp., \$19.95

By Ed Rifferey Jr.

Arty Kunst's career has been nothing if not controversial. As chairman of the department of study studies at Der Schule University, he has become a magnet for polemicists of various stripes. Kunst's critical strategy has been that of an academic amoeba: assimilating and devouring all he touches, using the energy of other, often hostile, theorists to power his own polemics. For instance, in response to the accusation that his paper, *Against "Against Interpretation,"* was "mere bull-shitting," Kunst wholeheartedly agreed, but said that he preferred to call it "com-post-modernism."

This new collection finds "Scat Man" Kunst shoveling his fertile insights as furiously and provocatively as ever. The title essay, "Nessitivity: The Suffix Glut," has been alternately hailed as an important monograph and flailed as an impotent monolith. Just as divisive in lit-crit circles (or spirals) is his "Knocks on Jacques: Deriding Derrida," in which he spins deconstructivism off into an infinite regress: "If a deconstruction is needed to 'read' any text, then that deconstruction requires a meta-deconstruction to understand it as a text—it sounds more like an M.C. Escher parody than a trenchant literary strategy, but go figure."

Typical of Kunst's playfulness is the aforementioned *Against "Against Interpretation"*—a collage of seemingly random ricochets through a book of Susan Sontag's essays. Kunst's technique here is merely to carve out the most flaccid slabs of Sontag's prose and butt them together with ellipses: "...[I]f form may be understood as a certain kind of content, it is equally true (and perhaps more important to ... have a chunk of that endless labor of self-explication and self-vindication ... and not to be caviled at, is his evident belief..."

Kunst—as he related in his PBS interview performance with Dick "I Knew Groucho" Cavett—was attempting to show how the negative space between Sontag's insights had an internal logic that would come to the fore in an aleatory context. Obviously, interruption is a key motif for Kunst—witness the dangling parenthesis, stuttered (and studied) ambiguity, relentless ellipses. Indeed, he leaves more things up in the air than Dow Chemical. As he pointed out to Cavett, their whole conversation was an interruption of sorts: because they were on public TV they could interrupt the usual pattern of interruption, i.e., commercials.

As the double-negative title of this game of Sontag implies, cancellation is also a favored strategy of Kunst's (ironically, Cavett was canceled shortly after the Kunst segment aired). Clearly, Kunst's tortured rationalizations are as full of post-structuralist neo-logisms (neo-log-jams?) and theoretical cul de sacs as those he ridicules, but he's nonetheless



become something of a "Teflon intellectual" with an endearing anecdotal style that lets him sidestep questions that would kneecap any other scholar.

A case in point: when asked at a recent symposium about the meaning of post-modernism, he replied,

"What kind of person would spend his time trying to answer that question? Well, I'll tell you. The kind of a person who, as a kid, fished with a cheap spin-casting rod (a Zebco 202) that was constantly snarled with backlash from always trying to cast too far out. The kind of person who spent countless hunchback hours on docks and in rowboats trying to uncoil these knots, until a perverse enjoyment developed in the (Gordian) unraveling. The kind of person who was overcome with awe by contemplating that such an amazing tangle had emerged (evolved?) from a single line. The kind of person who after a while asked if he could try to straighten out the reels of others (and perhaps their realities as well). The kind of person who lost sight of the lake—metaphorically at first, and then literally—until finally he repaired to his parents' knotty-pine-paneled basement enraptured by the slow-mo rococo explosion of rainbow-striped monofilament line.... It's been a long time since I've been fishing."

This non-answer/answer is a typically Kunstian gesture of allegorical self-annihilation. The opening gambit—rewrite the question to suit your purposes—is page one from the playbook of the quintessential proto-post-structuralist statesman Richard M. Nixon. After that it's equal parts Tom Snyder self-interview narcissism and Ronald Reagan loopy lyricism. And when Kunst pulls the story's string with that last line, you see the price paid for epiphany.

One is tempted to try to lure Kunst from his lair with a siren song from the Ramones ("Hey daddy-o, I don't wanna

go, down in the basement, there's something down there, I don't wanna go, Hey Romeo, there's something down there").

On second thought, who better to send into the suburban basement of our souls, fishing for postmodernism, than Arty Kunst. There amid the collectible debris of obsolete home entertainment centers, worn-out easy chairs and forgotten memorabilia we can almost hear him shout, "Eureka!" But then again, that might just be him tripping on the cord of the old vacuum. ■

The Zen of Activism

By Vishnu Feinberg
South Shambhala Press
121 pp., \$3.95

By Bo DiSadva

Time magazine called him "an enigma wrapped in a riddle wrapped in a mystery—wrapped in a Ralph Lauren suit." *Newsweek* said the same thing as *Time*, only it was an Yves Saint Laurent suit. *Spy* magazine called him "a Joe-College Werner Erhard, but even more of a weenie, I mean, ick."

Vishnu Feinberg, the object of all this hyperbolic invective, bills himself simply as, "an imperfect master for an imperfect world." But whatever his flaws, this Brooklyn-born college dropout has hustled himself to the top of the paperback bestseller list with his instant-karma classic, *The Zen of Activism*.

The book is built around a series of nouvelle-Zen riddles, or "Koans" (Feinberg calls them "Cohens"). Some examples: "What is the sound of one knee jerking? ...What if they gave a demonstration and no one came? ...Why do I have to repay my student loan when my older brother didn't?" Although these riddles remain in essence unanswerable, Feinberg follows each one with what has become his trade-

mark tag line: "Yo, am I a guru, or what?"

I cast my ballot for "or what," but Feinberg does have his moments of lucidity, as in this timeless conundrum of campus life: "Why do the rugged-individualist entrepreneurs of tomorrow band together on campus in fun-seeking fraternities and sororities, while many campus radicals—ostensibly organized to promote social unity and understanding—tend to be lone-wolf losers and anti-social jerks?" ■

The Socialist Register

(2nd, Revised Edition)
By Irving J. Minutiae
University Press
117 pp., \$39.95

By Pinky LaRouge

While essentially a rehash of Professor Minutiae's groundbreaking work *Late Capitalism, Early Retirement* (which he also regurgitated as *Assays and Essays: The Deconstructivist Strategy* and which was subsequently repackaged, revised and reprised by an opportunistic pulp publisher as *Hot to Trotsky*), this second edition of *The Socialist Register* does offer a new preface by an old friend of the author as well as an updated price.

Intellectual bulimia aside, however, the professor's thesis and methodology remain unique in a field long picked over by carrion-foul grad students circling in the publish-or-perish skies of academe. Minutiae examines how the families of wealthy socialists got their money and speculates (using an idiosyncratic Freudian-Marxist calculus) as to the various rifts and affinities between and among those loaded—and loaded with guilt.

He finds the socialist scions of timber barons, for instance, to be the stingiest supporters of lefty causes, a fact he attributes to the frontier mythology associated with logging (though he discredits other myths promulgated by male lumber heirs—to paraphrase Freud, sometimes a log is only a log). The descendants of real-estate speculators; conversely, tend to be relatively more forthcoming with politically correct contributions. (The professor's much-touted and oft-cited "gelt/guilt equation" is given full treatment here). The section describing the internecine hectoring of various Maoist stock-market millionaires and Stalinist shipping heirs debating which struggling left-wing publication isn't left-wing enough to get a donation this year is a tad overlong but has moments of comic-opera brilliance.

The author's list of disaffected DuPonts, recanted Rockefellers and the like will doubtless prove useful to novice snipers of granstmanship, but the old hands in the non-profit kiss-and-tell cartel already know who's a soft touch. Perhaps more interesting in the final analysis is Minutiae's ability to secure tenure with little more than the wisp of an idea and a wheelbarrow full of entrepreneurial chutzpah. ■